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ABSTRACT

This publication is a history of the College of Higher Vocational Studies (CHVS) since it was established in 1991 and provides commentary on developments in higher vocational education in Hong Kong during a period of unprecedented change and development in the provision of the Higher Diploma. "Principal's Diary" (Bradford Imrie) describes the significant first week in January 1993. "CHVS Commitment" (Bradford Imrie) provides an overview of the achievements of CHVS during a period of rapid growth and of considerable institutional change. More detail can be found in the section on selections from the "College Memorandum (Extracts) 1991-95." The three CHVS, "Annual Reports (Extracts)" also give an overview. Seven submissions provide insights into various issues that have been addressed since 1991: "Engineering: Professional and Vocational"; "Governor's Address at the Opening of the 1992-93 Session of the Legislative Council, Proposals: Vocational Education" (Christopher Patten); "Critical Appraisal of the Functions of the CHVS (1991-92)"; "Submission to the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee of Hong Kong: Higher Education 1991-2001"; "Teaching and Learning Quality Process Audits" (Bradford Imrie); "Assessment of Teaching and Learning Quality"; and "University and Polytechnics Grants Committee Review of Development of Higher Education in Hong Kong--Sub-Degree Work." Nine papers are included: "Assessment for Quality in Vocational Education"; "Quality of Learning: Assessment Implications"; "Marketing Higher Diploma Courses in the Hong Kong Context" (Dominic Chan, Bradford Imrie); "Higher Vocational Education in Hong Kong" (Shantilal Patel, Bradford Imrie); "Professional Standards: Judgements of Performance and the Rights of Students"; "Binary Policy in Higher Education--Hong Kong and the United Kingdom"; "Labor Market Considerations in Hong Kong: Developments at the Higher Vocational Level"; "International Recognition of Vocational Qualifications"; and "International Cooperation with Higher Vocational Qualifications: A Case Study." The final section is the 1995 edition of College Information Leaflets by Adeline Lau and Bradford Imrie. (YLB)

香港城市理工學院
City Polytechnic
of Hong Kong

香港城市大學
City University
of Hong Kong

ED 391 035

# COMMITMENT
# to
# HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Brad Imrie, Adeline Lau, Connie Lau

## COLLEGE
## of
## HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

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College of Higher Vocational Studies
City University of Hong Kong
Tat Chee Avenue
Kowloon
HONG KONG

Phone: 2788 8524
Fax: 2788 9315

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## INTRODUCTION

I have prepared this publication for a number of purposes. First, *Commitment to Higher Vocational Education* can be read as a history of the College of Higher Vocational Studies since it was established in 1991. Second, it provides commentary on developments in higher vocational education in Hong Kong during a period of unprecedented change and development in the provision of the Higher Diploma (HD). Third, *Commitment* identifies and discusses a range of issues which will continue to be relevant and important for the future development of the HD. Fourth, it has been distributed to all College staff for information and reference; there can be value in reflecting on experience. Finally, it represents my own commitment and service as the Foundation Principal of the College of Higher Vocational Studies (1991-95).

My 'Principal's Diary' is included because of the particular significance of the first week in January, 1993. The paper entitled 'Commitment' provides an overview of the achievements of the College during a period of rapid growth and of considerable institutional change. More detail can be found in the section on selections from the 'College Memorandum' which totalled 89 pages over the thirteen issues. The three extracts for the College, from the CPHK Annual Reports, also give an overview albeit restricted due to context.

What do submissions achieve? Difficult to judge but I hope that they are worth the effort. Submissions are, of course, part of the process called consultation - to be noted but not necessarily accepted! Submissions certainly represent considerable time and commitment; they are included to provide insights into various issues which have been addressed since 1991. I hope that the College will continue to respond to invitations to make submissions on behalf of higher vocational education and the needs of students.

Nine papers are included which address a range of topics. Three of the papers represent my commitment to the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA), one to the World Association for Cooperative Education (WACE), and one each to the International Conferences on Assessing Quality in Higher Education (AQHE) and on Improving University Teaching (IUT). As a result, CPHK hosted the Sixth AQHE Conference in July 1994, and CityU will host the 20th IUT Conference in July, 1995.

The final section is the 1995 edition of College Information Leaflets issued annually for information to staff and used as a vital part of the College's marketing and public relations strategy.

I hope that readers in Hong Kong, and elsewhere, will find this publication both informative and interesting. As noted in the last two papers, there is growing and overdue international awareness of the importance of higher vocational qualifications for sustaining growth in developed and developing economies alike. *Commitment to Higher Vocational Education* has been prepared as a contribution to that awareness.

Except where indicated, all of the authorship responsibilities are mine including those of accuracy and acknowledgement.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many acknowledgements, the first being a general and deep appreciation for the work and support of the staff of the College Office under the capable management of Annie Tam, the College Secretary. I have been most fortunate with the support of these colleagues and friends.

Also warmly appreciated are the contributions of my *Commitment* co-workers: Adeline Lau (Executive Officer) and Connie Lau, my Secretary, who has been both patient and skilful with its preparation for publication. In this regard, there is particular acknowledgement of the skills of Soman Yu (Clerical Officer) for her production of the cover design.

Finally I would like to express appreciation to my co-authors Dominic Chan (External Relations Office) and Shanti Patel (Division of Commerce) for their contributions to the papers which they presented at the 1993 IVETA Conference in Bali, Indonesia.

Brad Imrie

Bradford W Imrie

Principal (1991-95)
College of Higher Vocational Studies
City University of Hong Kong

May, 1995

## BIOGRAPHY

**BRAD IMRIE BSc(Eng), MSc, CEng, MIMechE, FHKIE - Principal of the College of Higher Vocational Studies (1991-95), City University of Hong Kong.**

In Scotland, he was Director of Staff Development at the University of Glasgow (1990-91); in New Zealand, Deputy Principal (Academic) of the Central Institute of Technology (1986-89); and Director of the Authority for Advanced Vocational Awards (1983-86). Author of *Compressible Fluid Flow* (1973), *Assessing Students, Appraising Teaching* (co-author, 1981) and some 70 papers in the fields of technology and higher education. Member of the Editorial Board of the *International Journal of Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, and of the *International Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, also a Standing Member of the International Conference on Improving University Teaching (IUT) Program Advisory Council, and Vice President Asia of the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA).

*A significant week is recorded in the form of a 'Don's Diary' which is a weekly feature of 'The Times Higher Education Supplement'.*

## PRINCIPAL'S DIARY
## (4-8 January 1993)

**Monday.** Back in the office for the first working day of the New Year. This will be a special week for the last two UK-style polytechnics in the world! It is UPGC Review week with degree course self-accreditation at stake for City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK), Hong Kong Polytechnic and for Baptist College. At present, all three institutions offer degree courses externally validated by the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) which, in 1990, took over from CNAA. The University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) has appointed a Review Panel under the chairmanship of Professor Brian Smith, Vice-Chancellor, University of West Sydney. The Panel (six UPGC and three HKCAA members) has allocated one and half days for each institutional visit, within an overall visit to Hong Kong of six days. The outcome will be of interest!

Other matters which require attention, include a briefing meeting with the Head of Division of Commerce before he meets with the Deans at the Resource Methodology sub-committee of the Academic Policy Committee (APC). I explain to TK the implications of the recurrent costs (1991-92) of HK$44,000/FTE for the College compared with HK$95,700 for the Faculties. CPHK has established a Faculty structure together with the College of Higher Vocational Studies which looks after 11 Higher Diploma courses and one Diploma course -about 37% of the total FTEs. The Faculties have departments, the College has divisions. This structure means that the College is always outnumbered and the Head (as my nominee) returned from the meeting suggesting that I should attend to provide more 'clout'. I point out that I will be at APC when recommendations are considered and will still be outnumbered!

Discuss workload with Geraldine Mak who is Acting College Secretary while Annie Tam is on maternity leave. We agree various matters and note that she will discuss with my Assistant, Dominic Chan, which of them will act as secretary for the Walkathon Committee which the Director has 'invited' me to chair as part of the CPHK's 10th Anniversary Programme, 1994-5.

Lunch in the Chinese Restaurant with H K Wong, Head of the Department of Public & Social Administration - discussed last week's lunchtime seminar on TQM for which he had invited a speaker from IBM Hong Kong. After lunch, find time to work on the papers which I revised yesterday, for submission to the 18th Improving University Teaching (IUT) Conference to be held in Germany, in July. I send a note to Ben Massey, in Maryland, to indicate interest in bringing the 20th IUT to Hong Kong in 1995. A good year would also be 1997 - I note that Emily Lau, a well known Legislative Councillor, will be giving a public lecture, at CPHK, entitled 'Political Developments in Hong Kong before 1997'. Unfortunately this is at 1pm on Thursday, 7 January, when I am scheduled to have lunch with the Review Panel.

**Tuesday.** The usual very convenient journey to work by MTR (25 minutes door to door) with a fax waiting for me from Chris de Winter Hebron in England. We have been developing a bid for the international conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education (AQHE) to come to Hong Kong in 1994 - looks promising. Complete the papers for IUT and then have a chat with Richard Li, Head of the Division of Technology, who has just returned from a trip to Canada during which he visited three campuses to develop his planning of a cooperative education programme as a stream of the Higher Diploma in Computer Studies -with an intake of 300 FT and 100 PT students probably the largest in Asia. CPHK policy is to provide one PC for every ten students.

Lunch is sandwiches (Marmite!) in the office to read the 'Higher' - I make a note to write an article for them to correct the impression given by previous articles, that the Asian Pacific International University (New Zealand) is active in Hong Kong. Next is the weekly meeting of the Principal's Advisory Committee - an opportunity for me to meet with the three Heads of Division. Differences between the College and the Faculties are discussed - one polytechnic, two systems.

**Wednesday.** Much of the morning is taken up with phone calls - one from Annie Tam to confirm that the baby does not sleep well and that she will be back at work on 11 February. Then a brief meeting with Andy Kong who chairs the College Board's Working Party on Quality Teaching - I mention that I have ordered copies of USDTU's recent book on student feedback, noted yesterday in the 'Higher'!

After lunch (Western Restaurant), I attend two sessions of the UPGC Institutional Review and reflect that it was predictable, with people like Malcolm Frazer (CNAA/HEQC) and Ann Wright (VC University of Sunderland) on the Panel, that there was a strong focus on quality assurance. There is no need for me to say anything in the first (45min) session - take notes to report to the College Board on Friday. The next session (60min) I attend is on the work of the Academic Board's Course Validation and Monitoring Committee and the discussion is livelier but somewhat disjointed.

After the reception, I take Malcolm off to have dinner - Sandi and I met him for the first time in New Zealand many years ago and it is good to spend some social time with him. We congratulate him on recent personal developments and, at about 11pm, we walk with him to Star Ferry for his return to Hong Kong island.

**Thursday.** After the usual start-the-day discussion with my secretary, Connie, the AD(Admin),Keith Houghton, phones to discuss coordination of approaches to sponsors for the 10th anniversary. He has just returned from the 8th International Meeting of University Administrators, in Singapore, and we discuss the possibility of hosting it in Hong Kong. Then a brief discussion with Julie Mo, Principal Lecturer in the Division of Technology - she will be part of a group meeting the Review Panel today and will report briefly to College Board tomorrow.

Geraldine arrives in time for us to meet new student members of the College Board, also the provisional Student Union (SU) President who will be in attendance. We discuss their rights as well as their responsibilities and review the agenda. They wish to discuss the item on tuition fees - Government policy to move to a cost recovery rate of 18% by 1997-98 means that the current tuition fee of $9,000 will double in two years. I emphasise that they should feel free to contact me or the College Office at any time for information; I have valued the close relationships that I have had with the two previous SU Presidents.

This is followed immediately by a meeting with Dennis Talbot, Associate Head of the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences - a very large division with 86 academic staff. The Head, Agnes Yeung (the only female head of an academic department at CPHK) is taking overdue leave.

Lunch with the Review Panel and with some of our employer representatives. After lunch Connie tells me that there might be a debriefing meeting (5.45 - 6.15). Bring the diary up to date before tackling an unfinished draft of a paper for the 1993 AQHE conference, which I plan to complete at the weekend. No debriefing - tennis at 7pm with Sandi to relax.

**Friday.** I start by confirming diary arrangements for next week and ask Connie to make an appointment with the Director for this afternoon to talk about TQM. Clear the in-tray before College Board starts at 9.30am. We finish at 12.45pm - mainly due to the unstarring of a number of items. New members (including students) were present and it was good to have a wide range of contributions. A brief report on the UPGC Review is given by me and two Board members who were present at different sessions - interesting. The two main matters of business are the course restructuring of the Diploma in Social Work (from a three term year to a semester system) and consideration of a report compiled from the Course Monitoring Committee's scrutiny of 12 Annual Course Reports - the first time for the College Board. Discussion is lively and augurs well for the integration of the new members.

Lunch in the Chinese restaurant - an opportunity to thank Geraldine for her work as Acting College Secretary and to thank the SU President, Matthew Tang, for his attendance at the College Board. Back in the office I discuss with Geraldine information just received from Estates Office regarding dates for College staff to complete the move to new accommodation in the new Purple Zone. I start to finalise the diary, also dealing with occasional phone calls and visits - the meeting with the Director will be on Monday.

I reflect on the experience of the Review, including the Mock Review held before Christmas. There is certainly one significant outcome - many more of the staff, at all levels, now have a much better understanding of our policies and procedures. As reported to the College Board, there was no feedback after the Review Visit and the Panel will report to the next meeting of the UPGC in April!

*A shorter version of this paper appeared in Inauguration, published by City University of Hong Kong.*

# COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

## COMMITMENT

### *Commitment - the highest level of intellectual and ethical development*[1]

In Hong Kong, higher education has been frequently equated with degree level education and the significance and contributions of sub-degree higher vocational education have been disregarded. But no longer - the Higher Diploma (HD) and Diploma (D) programmes of City University are now firmly established and internationally organised. At CityU, the College of Higher Vocational Studies was established in 1991 as a vocational Faculty to manage all of these programmes (with the exception of HD Legal Studies - a part-time programme in the Law Faculty). Consistent with the mission of CityU, the College's mission statement sets out clearly its commitments.

**Mission Statement of the College**

The College aims to provide programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers and the community of Hong Kong.

The College is committed to:

- excellence in teaching;
- student competency with communication and learning skills;
- fitness for purpose of vocational programmes to ensure graduate capability;
- co-operation and interaction with the practising professions and employers;
- caring for the well-being of all students and staff of the College;
- dissemination of knowledge and development of education;
- high standards of scholarship and professionalism of academic staff;
- staff development for all College staff; and
- enhancement of the standing of City University.

Since 1993, complementing the programmes offered by CityU and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), HD/D programmes are now offered by the two new Hong Kong Technical Colleges of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) and by the Open Learning Institute (OLI) of Hong Kong. Despite the increase in HD/D programmes available, the College has ensured that CityU is, by far, the most popular first choice for students applying for enrolment in its HD and D courses. It may be noted, in terms of current vocabulary, that the establishment of the College is an example of reengineering[2].

Within a relatively short period of less than four years, the College is now the biggest university Faculty in Hong Kong with about 200 academic staff and 4,100 FTE students (37% of CityU's enrolment) and is well-positioned to continue to develop an international reputation for its programmes, graduates and for CityU. Some of the achievements and considerations which justify such a claim are discussed briefly.

### Students Enrolling for the College's Courses

When the College was established in 1991, enrolment ceased for selected HD programmes that were then transferred to the VTC to be offered by the two new Technical Colleges which enrolled their first students in 1993. This was to enable the two Polytechnics to increase the proportion of degree students from 35% to 65%. It was expected that, with the increase in first year, first degree places, the proportion of students with HKALE passes enrolling for the College's courses, would reduce.

Table 1 shows the somewhat unexpected recent trend of an *increase* in the proportion of students enrolling with one or more HKALE passes and an increase in the *rate of increase* for this overall proportion. The proportion entering with two HKALE passes has also increased.

**Table 1 Proportion of HKAL Examination Passes for HD/D Students**

| HKALE Passes | 1990/91 | 1991/92 | 1992/93 | 1993/94 | 1994/95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 60% | 68% | 65% | 39% | 28% |
| 1 | 32% | 22% | 21% | 42% | 33% |
| >1 | 8% | 10% | 14% | 19% | 39% |
| All | 40% | 32% | 35% | 61% | 72% |

Certainly, the trend will have been influenced by the College's comprehensive and sustained marketing strategy[3] which started in 1991 but would not have been influenced, until 1994-95, by the prospect of City Polytechnic becoming City University of Hong Kong. During the two years 1993-94 and 1994-95, the College has moved generally to using interviews to select students and, undoubtedly, the relative maturity of the HKALE student would be preferred to that of the HKCEE student.

Some implications are considered. First, more HKALE students means that the entering students will be older and (probably) more mature; for 1994-95, average age between 19.6 and 20.5[4]. Also the 'quality' of the students should be better than a completely HKCEE entry. Accordingly, a second consideration is that such students should do better than a norm related to courses designed for HKCEE entry - at least in the first year. In this regard, first year attrition rates have declined. A third consideration is whether the College should continue to enrol the best students or introduce a quota to limit the proportion of students enrolling with HKALE passes.

## Graduates with Options

Diploma and Higher Diploma students have increasingly more options when they graduate. These options fall into two categories: one being preferred employment, the other being full-time further study for a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

For established programmes with a clear vocational focus such as accountancy, building or translation and interpretation, graduates have little difficulty finding employment. With new programmes such as the HD Applied Chinese Studies and the HD English for Professional Communication, it is gratifying to note that the first cohorts of graduates (in 1994) were very successful in obtaining employment. Increasingly, the higher diploma is achieving greater acceptance and recognition by private and public sector employers. Regrettably, in the past, such employers tended to be lacking in awareness of the capabilities of the HD graduates. College staff continue to promote, successfully, the HD graduate to private sector employers, professional bodies and to Government.

Table 2 shows trends in salary levels of D/HD graduates in comparison to degree graduates, on first employment. This indicates a market value for the HD/D graduates who have very little difficulty obtaining employment if they wish - many preferring other options such as full-time further study (see below). Table 3 shows satisfaction responses of graduates and indicates a high degree of satisfaction with first employment.

**Table 2 Basic Monthly Salary by Level of Award - Comparison of 1991 to 1994 Graduates**[5]

| **Level of Award** | **Year of Graduation** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1991 [HK$]** | **1992 [HK$]** | **1993 [HK$]** | **1994 [HK$]** |
| Bachelor Degree (BD) | 7598 (-3.2%) | 8205 (8.0%) | 9103 (10.9%) | 10554 (15.9%) |
| *Difference (BD-HD)* | 887 | 766 | 908 | 1525 |
| Higher Diploma (HD) | 6711 (5.0%) | 7439 (10.8%) | 8195 (10.2%) | 9029 (10.2%) |
| *Proportion (HD/BD)* | 88.3% | 90.7% | 90.0% | 85.6% |
| Diploma | 8803 (9.7%) | 9811 (11.5%) | 10870 (10.8%) | 11924 (9.7%) |
| **Overall** | **7368 (4.6%)*** | **8028 (9.0%)*** | **8846 (10.2%)*** | **10132 (14.5%)*** |

* (% of increase over previous year)

**Table 3 Job Satisfaction of Employed HD/D Graduates**

| **Year** | **90/91** | **91/92** | **92/93** | **93/94** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Satisfied* | 70.2% | 73.9% | 76.4% | 77.4% |
| *Dissatisfied* | 29.8% | 26.1% | 23.6% | 22.6% |

The second option for D/HD graduates is that of further study. Clearly, the preferred option for Hong Kong is for these graduates to take up the employment for which they have been educated and trained and, if desired, continue their studies part-time. For appropriate programmes, the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong recognises HD qualifications for block and specific credits up to 50% of the honours degree.

However, a significant proportion of graduates (Table 4) prefers to proceed to full-time study with the majority seeking opportunities overseas - mainly in England.

**Table 4 Proportion of HD Graduates Proceeding to Full-time Study**

| **Year** | **90/91** | **91/92** | **92/93** | **93/94** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Percentage* | 17.7% | 19.1% | 19.4% | 18.0% |

England and Hong Kong (by relationship) are the only countries in the world to offer a three year honours degree. The standing of the HD and the quality of the HD graduates are such that not only are the graduates accepted for the final year of the honours degree but a number of graduates can enrol directly for Master's degree study. Details are given in the College's Final Year Student Guide.

After an assessment of ten HD programmes in 1994, international recognition was further confirmed by the Business & Technology Education Council (England) that the CityU Higher Diploma was *at least* at the level of the Higher National Diploma (HND). In the UK, the HND is generally accepted as pass degree equivalent.

## Cost and Cost Effectiveness

For the College there are two identifiable products which reflect the quality of the staff and their commitment to higher vocational education. Each D/HD course or programme is a product developed through validation procedures in the form of the course documents. These documents are professional publications which, in turn, are assessed by appropriate professional bodies for exemption approval for membership and eligibility for professional qualifications. They also provide the basis for assessment by academic bodies for advanced standing approval for further study of CityU's D/HD graduates.

The D/HD course documents represent a framework for the actual transactions of teaching, learning and assessment, which contribute to the intended outcome of a capable graduate - thousands of whom graduate each year from City University under the management of the College. These two products, the courses (represented by documents) and the graduates, are tangible outcomes of the co-ordinated professional commitment of College staff.

The costs can be readily identified (Table 5) but cost effectiveness is not so straightforward.

**Table 5 1994 Costs per FTE Student (Annual Financial Report - Council, 23.11.94)**

| | Indirect ($'000) | Direct ($'000) | Ind/Dir | Total ($'000) | (1993) | FTE Students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Faculties | 49 | 84 | 58% | 133 | (112) | 7192 |
| **COLLEGE** | **40** | **39** | **103%** | **79** | **(71)** | **3616** |
| CityU | 46 | 69 | 67% | 115 | (100) | 10808 |

Note: At CityU, indirect costs are derived from the University's total recurrent expenditure less staff costs and on-costs, departmental expenses, teaching equipment and research incurred by academic departments. These are then apportioned to individual departments based on their student load. The expenses for Faculty Laboratory Centre and Faculty/College Office are distributed to the departments within the Faculty/College based on their teaching equipment expenditure and total direct costs respectively.

Table 5 gives details of direct, indirect and total costs for the College in relation to the other Faculties of City University. For direct costs it is evident that the costs are lower for the College due mainly to the university salary scale used for Faculty academic staff. For indirect costs it is also evident that the ratio of indirect/direct costs for the College is startlingly different from that of the Faculties. This is because the same basis of allocation is used although there are significant elements of indirect costs attributable to the academic research functions of the Faculties which do not apply to the College and therefore should not be allocated.

**Table 6 Comparison of 1994 (and 1993) Costs per FTE Student for CityU and (PolyU)**

| | Indirect ($'000) | Direct ($'000) | Ind/Dir | Total ($'000) | (1993) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PolyU** | 54.1 | 62.1 | 87% | 116.2 | (91.2) |
| **CityU(COL)** | 40.0 | 39.0 | 103% | 79.0 | (71) |

Table 6 shows a comparison of costs/FTE for CityU and PolyU. Comparable information is not available from VTC for the D/HD programmes offered by the Technical Colleges because they have not yet reached operational size. It is understood that, in 1991 terms, the cost was estimated as $60,000/FTE. In regard to PolyU, a more valid comparison would be that of the cost/graduate since the majority of PolyU HD programmes are two years full-time with an HKALE entry requirement.

The College's programmes, on a cost/FTE basis, are probably the lowest in cost of any offered in Hong Kong. If 'effectiveness' relates to quality then there are two complementary definitions which are relevant. The first is 'fitness for purpose'; the second is 'value added'. Fitness for purpose relates to both the programmes and the graduate. Validation of the programmes ensures fitness for purpose and the employer of the graduate should be satisfied with evident capability. On an ongoing basis, fitness for purpose is also the responsibility of Course Advisory Committees established by the College as part of its commitment to employers and professional bodies. These Committees have a majority lay representation and a lay chairperson. Value added relates to the entry characteristics of the students and, to reach the same high but minimum standard of the University's Higher Diploma, staff of some programmes may need to work harder than in others. Conversely, the quality of graduates from some programmes will be higher than in others.

## Current and Future Commitment

This brief account commemorates the development and achievements of the College over a period brief but vitally significant for the transition of the status of the institution. Over 150 academic staff have been recruited during this period to the College's Divisions of Commerce (CM), Humanities & Social Sciences (HS), and Technology (TC). The College has been successful with its recommendation to split the HS Division into the Division of Language Studies and the Division of Social Studies, to improve management and to prepare for further development in these vocational areas. For example, for some time, the College Board has recommended the introduction of a Higher Diploma in Japanese Studies; for the 1995-98 triennium, the Division of Social Studies will respond to Government's request to increase the planned enrolment of 200 FT students for the Diploma in Social Work by an addition of 100 FT students, as part of the commitment to improve the social wellbeing of the Hong Kong community.

The College's commitment to all of its students is exemplified by the production of a series of Student Guides: First Year Full-time, First Year Part-time, and Final Year. Likewise the College's commitment to its staff is indicated by provisions for staff development, formative evaluation, job description revision, and promotion, with staff being involved in all of these developments.

The commitment of College staff to the internal community of CityU and to the external community of Hong Kong, has been consistently encouraged by the Principal; a majority of academic staff contribute to the ongoing development of the marketing and public relations strategy of the College. With the range of commitment described in this article, the College is strongly positioned to respond very positively to the recommendations of the University Grants Council's review of sub-degree programmes in Hong Kong, expected in November 1995. The College's commitment to CityU will continue to strengthen the institution as a whole.

***'Quality springs from the commitment of every individual to finding better ways of achieving agreed objectives.'***[6]

[1] Perry, W G 'Cognitive and Ethical Growth: the Making of Meaning', Ch.3 in Chickering, A W and Associates (Eds) The Modern American College, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

[2] Hammer, M and Champy, J Reengineering the Corporation: A Manifesto for Business Revolution, New York: HarperCollins, 1993.

[3] Chan, D and Imrie, B W 'Marketing Higher Diploma Courses in the Hong Kong context' presented at the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA) Conference, Bali, 1993.

[4] Survey of First Year Students - 1994, Student Affairs Office, City University of Hong Kong, March 1995.

[5] Graduate Employment Survey, Student Affairs Office, ibid.

[6] 'Opinion', Times Higher Education Supplement, 4 September 1992.

# College Memorandum (Extracts)

## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM (1991-95)

The College Memorandum was part of my commitment to keep all College staff informed about various matters likely to be of interest to them as they developed with the College to fulfil the mission of the College, the Polytechnic and now the University. During the period September 1991 to January 1995, there were 13 issues.

The following extracts have been selected for their significance at the time and their continuing relevance as the College moves into a new phase of management and organisation. Occasionally, staff would indicate appreciation for the Memorandum:

> *"Let me also say that I enjoy reading the College Memoranda which are very informative, up-to-date, and full of insights. I have gained a much better understanding of the past and present of the College by going through them. It was sad for me to hear you say there will be a change of Principal this year. Though I do not understand the reasons behind, I can see from the reactions of the colleagues at the meeting that you are going to be missed by many, including myself."*

### COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 1 (3pp) 6 September 1991

WELCOME to all staff! The longest serving member of the College is Annie Tam who has been College Secretary since February 1991. However, most of the staff in the three Divisions took up their appointments as from 1 September.

Many of the transferring staff have been busy with College work before that date and I am very grateful for their enthusiasm and commitment. I hope to meet all of the transferring staff as soon as convenient. On 2 September I met the newly-appointed staff during an induction day which was also an opportunity for them to meet new colleagues. Arrangements were advised for other staff development opportunities as noted later. I also introduced a draft mission statement for the College which is attached for your consideration and comment before it is presented to the College Board for adoption.

**Principal's Advisory Committee**

Since I took up the new position of College Principal I have been busy coping with new information and many new experiences. I have established a Principal's Advisory Committee (PAC) which meets weekly to co-ordinate planning and other arrangements to provide staff with resources to teach Polytechnic students enrolled in College courses. The PAC comprises:

| | |
|---|---|
| T K Ghose | HoD Commerce (CM) |
| Richard Li | HoD Technology (TC) |
| Agnes Yeung | HoD Humanities & Social Sciences (HS) |
| Annie Tam | College Secretary |

My only disappointment so far has been the loss of the Vice Principal, Thomas Wu, who departed on 25 August for a year in Canada. The appointment of a Vice Principal is being discussed.

**Establishment of College Board**

Under the committee structure of the Polytechnic, each Faculty and the College have to establish a Board to discuss all matters pertaining to the planning, development, implementation and monitoring of the courses offered.

With myself and three Division Heads as Ex-officio Members, the College Board also consists of Nominated Members from other Departments and the Academic Support Centres, Student Members and three Elected Members from each of the Divisions. The College Secretary as the Election Officer for the College Board will write to you shortly regarding the details.

**Students**

Also during September, we have the effective beginning of the College with our first enrolment of Higher Diploma and Diploma students who will be starting their classes on 7 October. We welcome these students and I will be liaising with the Students' Union and with Student Affairs Office to ensure that there is planning for "student wellbeing and development". You may be interested to know that this is the title of an inaugural international conference to be held in Holland in November, co-sponsored by the Free University of Brussels and the Student Wellness Institute of the USA.

In addition all staff are recommended to attend the following seminars which will be presented by Professor Harry Murray, University of Western Ontario:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 9 October 1991 | 10-12 noon | Use of student evaluation for improving teaching and for promotion |
| 10 October 1991 | 10-12 noon | Awards for excellence in teaching - experience in Canadian universities |
| 10 October 1991 | 3:30-5pm | Evaluation of teaching as quality assurance - (public seminar) |

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 2 (4pp) 20 November 1991

**At this stage, the College has approximately 1,000 full-time students and 700 part-time students. As at 31 December 1991, the numbers will be checked so that a census return can be made to the UPGC.**

## MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

It is clearly important that the City Polytechnic and its courses are known throughout Hong Kong and beyond. You may therefore be interested in the following initiatives.

### Polytechnic

Mr Keith Houghton, Associate Director (Administration), has set up a working party to develop a "Corporate Image" for the Polytechnic. Mr Richard Li, HoD (TC), will represent the College on the working party.

Mr Houghton has indicated a first impression of "excellent" of the new promotional videotape prepared by ETC for the Polytechnic. The video lasts 7 minutes and a copy is available, on loan from the College Office (Betsy Lo at Extn 7195) for anyone interested.

A pilot School Visit Programme has been organised for the Polytechnic by a working group chaired by Ms Ruth Yee, Student Affairs Office. This will take place on Saturday morning, 23 November, and it is hoped that it will be attended by approximately 300 staff and students from Forms 5 and 7. If successful, it is proposed that this programme will be repeated on the basis of invitation to schools for allocated places.

### College

The College is participating actively in the School Visit Programme and a College Marketing and PR strategy is being developed and implemented by a small working group, convened by the Principal, with the following membership:

Mr Danny S K Yau, Division of Technology
Mr Kevin Manuel, Division of Technology
Ms Teresa H C Choi, Division of Commerce
Mr C H Mak, Division of Commerce
Ms Maria Y L Cheung, Division of Humanities & Social Sciences.

As a module linked to the new Polytechnic videotape, a short College promotional videotape has also been prepared (also available on loan from Betsy Lo at Extn 7195). I am most grateful to Mr John Durham (ETC) for his production efforts and to various Higher Diploma students who gave their time as participants.

**"A Self Profile for Continuing Professional Development"**

This resource has been published by the UK Further Education Unit (FEU). The following description is taken from the introduction:

> "The profile is intended to assist teachers to keep under review their competencies; and to identify and articulate any staff developments needs related to immediate job competence, foreseeable responsibilities, institutional or career development. It is meant to be a personal record that can be copied, quoted from or discussed, within the context of applications, interviews, staff development sessions or appraisals."

Fifty copies of this pocket-sized publication are available from Betsy Lo at Extn 7195 for staff who are interested.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 3 (6pp) 27 February 1992

**We are now past the mid-point of the academic year and we can look back with a sense of relief and of satisfaction that a great deal has been achieved under adverse circumstances. We are now able to plan more systematically for the changes and opportunities that lie ahead, as noted later. I know that many of you have experienced considerable stress - thank you very much for your commitment as we prepare for future development.**

### STAFF

The College is continuing to recruit staff for all of the Divisions and for the College Office. There will still be opportunities for academic staff in the Faculties to transfer to the College if vacancies are available. For horizontal transfer, such staff will be given priority consideration for applications received before 30.6.92.

All Faculty staff who transfer to the College will, of course, transfer to the conditions of employment of College staff. A comparison summary for College and Faculty academic staff is shown below :

**Summary of Policy Comparisons : College/Faculties**

| Academic staff | College | Faculties |
|---|---|---|
| All students (FTE target) | 35% | 65% |
| Staff contact (hrs/wk) | 13.5 | 10 |
| Staffing structure | 2:4:8 | 35:65 |
| Research mandatory | No | Yes |

## Staff Performance

The current form on which recommendations are made for re-appointment of staff is being redesigned. It is the intention of the Polytechnic to implement a Government/UPGC decision and introduce university salary scales for Faculty staff who meet certain criteria.

For re-appointment of College staff, there will be no specific research criteria and re-appointment will be based on the requirements of the job specification. This will require evaluation and the College Board has established a working group to develop policy and procedures. In so doing, the working group will consult widely and there will be opportunity for views to be expressed. Clearly, every member of staff should ensure that their job description is up-to-date.

There are indications that increasing interest is being taken by the Government and by UPGC in such matters as accountability and performance indicators; these are likely to involve qualitative as well as quantitative considerations. The AD(Academic) has been asked to develop principles and procedures for a Polytechnic appraisal scheme. All such matters are clearly related to staff development and you are encouraged to consider your own needs and aspirations in this regard.

## Student Guide (Get Ready for City Polytechnic)

A Working Group has been established to prepare a student guide to send to new students prior to their arrival for the first time at City Polytechnic. The purpose of the guide is to provide up-to-date information to students (and their parents) about the changes which they will experience as they move from school to City Polytechnic - at this stage probably the most important change that they will have encountered. The membership of the Working Group is :

Mr B W Imrie (P)
Mr Dominic Chan (A/P)
Mr Joseph Chan (SAO)

CM : Mr Peter Fu (SL)
Ms Teresa Choi (L)
HS : Mrs Fanny Liu (SL)
TC : Mr Kevin Manuel (L)

## Evaluation of Teaching

The College Board (26.2.92) has established a Working Group on Evaluation of Teaching to develop policy and procedural guidelines for the College on evaluation of teaching. The membership is :

CM : Mr C N Lo (SL)
Mrs Holly Yu (SL)
HS : Mrs Dorothea Lee (SL)
Dr Aileen Chan (L)
TC : Mr Norman Devall (PL)
Mr Andy Kong (L)
Secretary : Miss Debbie Ng (AA)

The terms of reference are :

To develop policy and procedural guidelines for the College on evaluation of teaching.

(1) For formative purposes - to enable staff to improve teaching and demonstrate quality of performance.
(2) For summative purposes - to enable staff performance to be judged for such matters as renewal of contract and promotion.
(3) For promotion purposes - to draft procedures and criteria consistent with those approved by Academic Board for promotion of Faculty staff from Senior Lecturer to Principal Lecturer.
(4) For recognition and reward - to draft procedures and criteria for annual awards for teaching excellence.
(5) Tò consult with College staff, Course Committees and with appropriate sources within the Polytechnic, eg. AD(Academic), Deans, Head(ETC).

There will be opportunity for consultation and the aim is to develop evaluation for the improvement of teaching. In general the work of academics can be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping functions in terms of the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching. For College staff, research work is not expected but scholarship is.

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**COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 4 (8pp) 29 June 1992**

## THE FIRST YEAR

> "There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new system. For the initiator has the enmity of all who would profit by the preservation of the old system and merely lukewarm defenders in those who would gain by the new one." (Machiavelli, 1513)

The College represents a new system and the first year has not been without its difficulties. However, much has been achieved and this memorandum will provide information about the continuing development of the College.

### Salary Scales

As at 1 January 1991, all academic staff were paid on the Polytechnic scale (MPS) and staff who accepted transfer appointments at the same grade retained this scale on a personal basis. Staff who transferred with promotion moved to the new College scales which were approved by Council (19.11.90) for recommendation to the UPGC and to the Secretary for Education and Manpower.

This change was based on the consideration that, with expansion of higher education and the establishment of two new technical colleges, the polytechnics would no longer be the sole providers of HD courses - see back page. There was therefore need for co-ordination and parity. The grades in the colleges are aligned with those in the polytechnics but the scales stop two points below the existing maxima. New staff are appointed to the College scales. New Executive Officer scales are being introduced for all Polytechnic COs and AAs.

### Transfer and Secondment

As advised in College Memorandum 3, provision was made for Faculty staff to transfer (with priority) to the College, for applications received by 30 June 1992. There will be no further transfer opportunities. About 18 transfer appointments are expected for 1992-93 with a few more when vacancies are available. A warm welcome is extended to these new colleagues who bring with them much relevant experience.

The College has been asked to co-operate with the Faculties to assist with the deficit problems of some departments. For this purpose, one-year secondments of staff are being arranged and we also welcome these staff.

## WHAT ARE RESOURCES FOR?

The academic staff proportion of the College's operational budget is about 80%. With the essential assistance of administrative staff, academic staff are expected to deliver quality teaching and quality courses. The professionalism involved includes discipline competence as well as competence in the management of learning. Similar to budget accountability (ultimately to the taxpayer), professionalism also involves accountability which implies evaluation. A principal accountability is to our students. Of particular importance is formative evaluation (for own improvement of performance) but summative evaluation is also important. As such, evaluation will be a requirement for judgements of performance related to renewal of contract and substantiation.

A confidential teaching evaluation service is provided by the Professional Development Unit (PDU) of the Educational Technology Centre. The following is extract from 'Guide to the Teaching Portfolio' (PDU, 1991).

> "The student evaluation of teaching questionnaire, which is the basis of the Teaching Evaluation and Improvement Package (TEIP), has been carefully designed and validated for the purpose of collecting student ratings of overall teaching effectiveness. Data is also derived which identifies particular strengths in teaching and areas requiring improvement. The administration procedures have been designed for confidentiality, and ease of use of the service. Further information can be found in the document 'Student Evaluation and Academic Appraisal' published by the PDU."

The Teaching Portfolio is strongly recommended and can serve two major purposes:

> "First, it provides a means for presenting information which fairly and fully reflects an individual's teaching activities and accomplishments. In this way the portfolio assists staff to build a case about their teaching effectiveness and merit when seeking a new position, promotion, tenure, teaching awards, etc. Secondly, the portfolio provides the staff member with material for ongoing review, reflection and subsequent development of teaching."

## FAREWELL

### The First Academic Staff Resignation from the College!

Mrs Cheung Yip Ling, Maria, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, resigned from the College in May 1992. She has emigrated to Canada and will be engaged in doctorate studies in Winnipeg. Maria served in the College marketing group and made a valuable contribution. Her departure will be noted in the College's history as the first academic staff to leave! We wish her every success in all her endeavours.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 5 (4pp) 28 September 1992

**"Change is too important to be left to the leader."**

This was the introduction used by Professor Michael Fullam, University of Toronto, in his keynote speech to the Seventh Regional Conference of the Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration, held at the University of Hong Kong in August. I have used it as an introduction to this College Memorandum to emphasise that the changes that lie ahead of us are a collective responsibility. Quality means caring about our own performance to help our students. "Quality springs from the commitment of every individual to finding better ways of achieving agreed objectives." (Times Higher, Opinion, 4.9.92)

All staff should note that evaluation of teaching will be required for such matters as promotion, recognition of good teaching, and assessment for renewal of contract or substantiation. An appropriate evaluation service is provided by ETC - contact Tracy Lo (Extn 8769).

Our part-time lecturers are a very important group of staff - please ensure that they feel part of the College. They need our continuing support as colleagues to ensure that the quality of education is maintained for our many hundreds of part-time students.

## STUDENTS

Considerable effort has been made to ensure that we meet our enrolment targets for each course and that our students will be of an appropriate quality. At this stage, enrolment is making good progress and we look forward to welcoming nearly 1900 full-time and part-time students. In many respects students are also our customers and our activities should be directed to help (empower) each individual to make the best use of the opportunities which are provided at City Polytechnic.

## COLLEGE BOARD

A Special Meeting of the College Board was held on 9 September and the Board approved the following recommendations.

### Split of the Division of Humanities & Social Sciences

"Resolved to submit the proposal to the Course Advisory Committees for Language Studies and for Social Studies for consideration and, on the basis of a positive response, to recommend it to the Academic Board via the Academic Policy Committee for consideration and approval."

### Higher Diploma in Banking and Financial Services

"Resolved to recommend the proposed HD Banking & Financial Services to the Academic Board via the Academic Policy Committee for incorporation into the Academic Development Proposals, subject to modifications to the document in the light of the comments made by the Board."

## PREVIEW OF OUR SECOND YEAR

During the first year of the College, all staff worked very hard under adverse conditions to provide students with good quality education and training. The second year now provides an opportunity for all of us to demonstrate fully our commitment to quality as indicated in the Mission Statements (see Information Leaflet Six) of City Polytechnic and of the College of Higher Vocational Studies.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 6 (6pp) 30 December 1993

## QUALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism means owning responsibility for the job we are doing. It means caring about all of our responsibilities. A 'novel' definition[1] is that quality is "the inverse side of caring - a feeling of identification with what one's doing". This then addresses the implications of being 'care-full' or 'care-less'. The professional responsibility questions for staff are:

What are you trying to do?
Why are you trying to do it?
How are you doing it?
Why are you doing it that way?
Why do you think that is the best way of doing it?
How do you know it works?

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[1] Pirsig, R (1971) Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, London: Corgi Books.

Preliminary results ('Times Higher', 4.12.92) of a two-year survey of attitudes to undergraduate learning suggest that bad lecturing is one of the biggest barriers to quality in higher education. Students tended to see deficiencies in terms of feedback on assignments; presentational skills of teachers; staff-student contact outside timetabled hours and work experience opportunities.

### Assessment, Appraisal and Evaluation: Staff Performance

At our last staff meeting (26 Nov) on assessment and evaluation, various issues were raised regarding both purposes and procedures. The concepts need to be clearly understood. Assessment relates to judgements associated with personnel-type purposes such as substantiation, renewal of (contract) appointment, promotion. (Note that this is similar to the use of assessment for judging student performance and standards are required.)

Appraisal is not widely used in CPHK - mainly in the non-academic departments. In my view, the primary purpose of appraisal is to provide systematic procedures for professional and career development - for each individual and separate from the purposes of assessment.

Evaluation is common to both assessment and appraisal for staff performance. For course performance, systematic monitoring and evaluation of a course is also a responsibility of Course Committees. For such purposes, evaluation should use at least two sources of information - as appropriate one of these should be student evaluation (or feedback).

**For all staff performance purposes, the portfolio approach is strongly recommended - information and advice are readily available from the Professional Development Unit of the Educational Technology Centre.**

The context for evaluation of staff performance is provided by the individual's job specification and the mission statements of the College and Polytechnic. The Polytechnic has a commitment to maintaining high educational standards and it is worth noting some of the issues raised on 26 November in regard to being professional.

- 'Professionals have a Code of Ethics.'
  CPHK does not have a code of ethics for staff or a code of teaching responsibility. Should such a code be developed?

- 'Staff training is adequately provided by PDU/ETC.'
  Some aspects of training may be provided by other means. However, it is certainly the case that newly appointed staff should participate in PDU courses on basic aspects such as lecturing, small group teaching, assessment of student performance, and evaluation.

## STUDENTS

### Feedback

Our reputation for quality ultimately depends on the performance of our graduates - in employment, in further study, as research students. One of our students graduated in 1992 with a Higher Diploma in Building Surveying and is currently enrolled at the University of Greenwich in the final year of a BSc honours degree. She reports:

> "The content of my dissertation is about the Alternative Disputes Resolution in Construction Industry in Hong Kong. My supervisor is a barrister and he is quite demanding. I was so upset after the first time I handed in my first drafting (of a chapter) - He complained that my written English was so poor. Indeed, I was so careless. The second time I handed in my work was much better. Well, that's the way you learn."

### Tertiary Tuition Fees

The table shows details of fees for degree and sub-degree courses (UPGC) for the period 1992-93 to 1996-97. Government policy is to achieve a recovery rate of 18% by 1997-98. The following principles have been adopted:

(a) fees for sub-degree courses should continue at their present level of 75% of the fees for degree courses;

(b) the increase in tuition fees will be matched by the Local Student Finance Scheme for students in need of financial assistance - 'no qualified student should be denied tertiary education through lack of funds'.

| Year | Estimated Cost Recovery Rate (%) | Fee ($) | | % increase over previous year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Degree | Sub-degree | |
| 1992-93 (A) | 8.2 | 11,600 | 9,000 | 16/20 |
| 1993-94 (A) | 10.6 | 17,000 | 12,750 | 46.6/41.7 |
| 1994-95 (I) | 13.5 | 24,000 | 18,000 | 41.2 |
| 1995-96 (I) | 16 | 31,000 | 23,250 | 29 |
| 1996-97 (I) | 17 | 36,000 | 27,000 | 16 |

(A) Actual Fees (I) Indicative Fees for 1994-95 to 1996-97

## MARKETING

### School Visit Programme 1992 - Report

A great deal has been achieved with marketing and, in particular, with the 1992 School Visit Programme. The following is an extract from a report prepared by Dominic Chan, Assistant to Principal, who co-ordinated the programme.

> "Responses to the School Visit Programmes were very encouraging. The College originally planned to hold three programmes, each for 300 visitors from 12 schools. To accommodate the enthusiastic response, eventually four programmes were held with each attended by an average of about 270 students from 12 to 14 schools. A total of 52 schools and 1090 students (including some teachers) participated in the four programmes held on Saturday mornings.
>
> Acknowledgement should be given to the Student Affairs Office which sent staff in turn to give talks on graduate employment and further studies. Ms Deborah Ng of the Academic Secretary's Office spoke on entrance requirements and application procedures on all of the four occasions. Her contribution is particularly appreciated."

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**COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 7 (6pp)** **17 March 1993**

## SPECIAL ISSUE: QUALITY ASSURANCE IN THE POLYTECHNIC

Readers may wish to refer to College Memorandum 6 (30 December 1992) in which there was discussion of issues such as quality and quality assurance, quality and professionalism.

### UPGC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW DOCUMENT (October 1992)

This document sets out the principles of quality assurance at the Polytechnic and defines quality as "fitness for purpose" - relating process to objectives.

Quality is better assured if:

- those directly responsible for the delivery of the educational experience have a sense of ownership of the procedures;
- the institutional ethos is conducive to self-evaluation and self-criticism;
- sufficient resources are devoted to the process;
- there is a commitment to acting upon the results;
- there is a sharing of good practice.

## DEFINITIONS ELSEWHERE

In College Memorandum 4 (29 June 1992), for a discussion of quality in higher education, I recommended Robert Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance (Corgi Books, 1977), in which it is noted that:

> "Quality exists whether it is defined or not" (p211)

and,

> "People differ about Quality, not because Quality is different, but because people are different in terms of experience." (p244)

However, some definitions may be of use at this stage. The definitions are taken from two sources: Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, Quality Framework, 1992, and the UK Academic Audit Unit now part of the English Higher Education Funding Council. First, Quality Framework:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Quality Assurance:** | Quality assurance encompasses all the policies, systems and processes directed to ensuring maintenance and enhancement of the quality of educational provision in higher education. |
| **Quality Control:** | Quality control relates to the arrangements (procedures, standards, organisation) within HE institutions which verify that teaching and assessment are carried out in a satisfactory manner. Quality control would include the external examiner system and is usually post hoc and the responsibility of the institution itself. |
| **Quality Audit:** | Quality audit is the process of ensuring that the quality control arrangements in an institution are satisfactory and effective. In practice, prime responsibility for quality audit lies individually or collectively with institutions, and it extends to most aspects of quality assurance in an institution including staff development and curriculum design. |

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 8 (8pp) 31 May 1993

## AN EVENTFUL YEAR!

Much has happened since the beginning of the year when College Memorandum 6 was distributed. Memorandum 7 was a special issue which dealt with Quality Assurance in the Polytechnic. Some of the main events of the year are summarised below and then discussed in more detail.

- All College staff have moved to new accommodation.
- College Board has approved the College's first new Higher Diploma course.
- CPHK has changed its management structure.
- QAC replaces CVMC with the aim of promoting a quality culture.
- Conditions of appointment have changed and new leave arrangements have been introduced.

- The College continues to expand but budget considerations may mean that 'productivity' will have to increase.
- The layout of the academic year has been changed for 1993-94.

## HIGHER DIPLOMA IN BANKING AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

On 12 May 1993, the College Board approved the new Higher Diploma in Banking and Financial Services as a course and qualification, for recommendation to the Academic Board. This recommendation completed the College's responsibility for internal validation which, in this case, dealt with a course which had been developed in less than one year - congratulations to all concerned.

## UPGC

UPGC, of course, stands for University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. UPGC (5.11.92) issued revised targets for the achievement of the Government's decision on further expansion of tertiary education. For the current triennium 1992-95, the targets for CPHK are summarised below, together with CPHK's revised ADP.

### UPGC TARGETS : ADP (April 1993)

| | 1993-94 FTE | 1994-95 FTE |
|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate | 5319 : 5836 (*55%*) | 6014 : 6255 (*56%*) |
| Taught PG | 582 : 636 (*6%*) | 702 : 687 (*6%*) |
| Research PG | 172 :173 (*2%*) | 234 : 249 (*2%*) |
| HD/D | 4299 :3967 (*37%*) | 4089 : 4091 (*36%*) |
| Total FTE | 10372 : 10612 | 11039 : 11282 |

The College is responsible for thousands of students each year and their education and training represents a very important contribution to the sustainable economic and social development of Hong Kong. To a significant extent, the quality of the future of Hong Kong depends on the quality of our Higher Diploma graduates.

## THE NEXT TRIENNIUM 1995-98

Without mentioning the year which precedes 1998, the next triennium is of particular significance for CPHK. Indeed, even these initials are likely to change by the beginning of this triennium.

All of us are now invited to start planning for the next triennium with regard to numbers of students, future needs for particular skills, new courses (qualifications) - bearing in mind that it takes at least one year to develop a new course (e.g. HDBF) and that students commencing study in 1995 will graduate in 1998; students starting in 1997 will graduate in the year 2000! Our job is to work with government and employers to plan to meet the needs of Hong Kong as a Special Administrative Region of China, in the next century. There is no doubt that higher vocational skills will be exceedingly important for this future.

**College Working Groups**

As part of its commitment to quality during its formative years, the College established three working groups. The time and commitment of the staff noted are much appreciated.

The Working Group on the Higher Diploma has completed its work of reviewing the standing and standard of the higher diploma in Hong Kong and in City Polytechnic. Reports have been prepared and various actions initiated including discussions with organisations such as Education and Manpower Branch, Civil Service Branch, UPGC, Vocational Training Council, Hong Kong Polytechnic and overseas organisations such as the Business and Technology Education Council (UK).

Membership: Chairman - B W Imrie
Secretary - Geraldine Mak
CM - Brian Vickers, S G Patel
HS - Duncan Hunter, Kathleen Ng
TC - Charlie Choi, Raymond Li

The Working Group on Quality Teaching has consulted widely within the College to develop principles and procedures for the formative and summative evaluation of teaching with a view to promoting quality in this vital area of activity for College staff.

Membership: Chairman - Andy Kong (TC)
Secretary - Geraldine Mak
CM - C N Lo, Holly Yu
HS - Aileen Chan, Dorothea Li
TC - Julie Mo

The Working Group on Appraisal has renamed itself the Working Group on Professional Development of College Staff and is addressing principles and procedures for systematic needs analysis owned by the staff involved so that the outcome will be professional development which is 'fit for its purpose', reflecting the setting of worthwhile goals and the means of achieving them.

Membership: Chairman - W Y Sham (TC)
Secretary - Geraldine Mak
CM - Nicholas Tam
HS - Dennis Talbot, Margaret Ng, Esther Chow
TC - Terry Lam

## FROM THE LITERATURE

'The creation of any sort of public moral code may seem a fruitless task but it is one to which political philosophers such as Barbara Goodwin, reader in political philosophy at Brunel University, are giving deep thought. "The delegation of power and specialisation of function within a bureaucracy operates to relieve many bureaucrats of responsibility," she says. "Although blame for mistakes formally rests at the top (but penalties are transmitted downwards internally) the number of people involved in the carrying out of a policy makes responsibility for its operations diffuse. The delegation of functions may mean that a policy conceived at the highest level turns out very differently in its execution".'

Alison Utley, 'Times Higher', 19 March 1993.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 9 (8pp) 6 October 1993

A new academic year has started with the opportunity to welcome new students and new staff to the College. The new structure of two 14-week semesters was introduced with the early starting date of 20 September. Many students were not enrolled due to first-time operational problems with JASPIC. Thank you for coping with the situation - consideration is being given to ensuring that it does not happen again.

### FUTURE CERTAINTIES

Most staff and students are aware that it is expected that CPHK, along with Baptist College and Hong Kong Polytechnic, will be invited to make proposals in regard to full university status and title. This follows full self-accreditation agreed by the Governor in Council (20 July 1993) subject to 5-yearly review by the UPGC. This is good news for all concerned but some staff and some students have expressed concerns about the future of sub-degree courses.

As this institution continues through a period of much change, let me offer the following 'certainties'!

* UPGC mission for CPHK specifies vocational education and names the qualifications:

  - offers a range of courses leading to the award of Diplomas, Higher Certificates, Higher Diplomas, Professional Diplomas and First Degrees;
  - offers a relatively small number of higher degrees and has research programmes in some subject areas;
  - emphasises the application of knowledge and vocational training; and
  - maintains strong links with industry; and employers.
    (Extracts from UPGC letter dated 16 October 1993)

- the Outline Academic Development Proposals set out UPGC-related targets up to 1997-98:

|  | 92/93 Actual | 93/94 F/C | 94/95 F/C | 95/96 F/C | 96/97 F/C | 97/98 F/C |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| College | 3,313<br>(32.9%) | 3,745<br>(35.3%) | 4,000<br>(35.5%) | 4,002<br>(35.2%) | 3,997<br>(34.7%) | 3,997<br>(34.6%) |
| FB | 2,432<br>(24.1%) | 2,365<br>(22.3%) | 2,489<br>(22.1%) | 2,559<br>(22.8%) | 2,662<br>(23.1%) | 2,660<br>(23.%) |
| FHS | 1,314<br>(13.5%) | 1,512<br>(14.2%) | 1,526<br>(13.5%) | 1,374<br>(12.1%) | 1,379<br>(12.0%) | 1,3811<br>(11.9%) |
| FLW | 408<br>(4.0%) | 403<br>(3.8%) | 401<br>(3.6%) | 405<br>(3.6%) | 405<br>(3.5%) | 405<br>(3.5%) |
| FST | 2,618<br>(26.0%) | 2,587<br>(24.4%) | 2,855<br>(25.3%) | 3,006<br>(26.4%) | 3,091<br>(26.8%) | 3,119<br>(27.0%) |
| Total | 10,085 | 10,612 | 11,272 | 11,385 | 11,533 | 11,561 |

N.B. "F/C" is the forecast student numbers based on the follow through of the current ADP only.

Clearly the UPGC has been specific about the importance of higher vocational education as part of the foreseeable future of CPHK. HD/D student targets have been set for 1997-98 and it is reasonable to conclude that these student numbers will be the basis of planning for the following triennium/century.

## AWARDS FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE (Quality Assurance Committee - QAC)

Academic Board (28 September) approved the QAC's proposal to establish awards to recognise distinguished teaching for implementation from 1993/94 - details later. Such a proposal was made by the College to the Staff Development Committee over a year ago, on the basis of similar schemes operating in many tertiary institutions around the world.

## 'ASSESSING LEARNING QUALITY: RECONCILING INSTITUTIONAL, STAFF AND EDUCATIONAL DEMANDS'

This was the title of the QAC Seminar presented on 17 June 1993, by Professor John Biggs, Department of Education, University of Hong Kong. Copies of his paper are available - these are some extracts:

> 'The quickest way to change student learning is to change the assessment system.' (Elton & Laurillard)
>
> 'That assessment methods drive institutional learning is well known ..... the phenomenon is known as backwash, and it determines what is learned more than do formal curricular and teaching methods.'

> 'Assessment occupies a key place in determining quality learning outcomes, but assessment practices are part of a wider picture that includes but extends beyond the responsibility of any individual teacher. An institution is a holistic, interactive system, and you can't tackle problems piecemeal on the lines of the deficit model. Here is another reason why CPHK's Assessment Policy and Guidelines is so useful, providing as it does a coherent set of principles and procedural knowledge about assessment.'

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**COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 10 (8pp)** **13 January 1994**

## A 'TEACHER'S DOZEN'

**Fourteen General, Research-based Principles for Improving Higher Learning in our Classrooms (AAHE Bulletin, 45, 8, April 1993, pp3-7)**

Assumptions

* to most effectively and efficiently promote learning, faculty (staff) need to know something about how our students learn;

* there really are some general research-based principles that faculty can apply to improve teaching and learning in their classrooms;

* college teaching is so complex and varied that faculty members themselves will have to figure out whether and how these general principles apply to their particular disciplines, courses and students.

## MARKETING

### College Student Visit Programmes

Three School Visit Programmes were held on 13, 20 and 27 November 1993 to promote our Higher Diploma and Diploma courses directly to prospective students. On the three Saturday mornings, a total of 1,126 visitors from about 50 different secondary schools toured the campus and listened to the presentations made by our staff. The response was encouraging. Special thanks to the following staff and students who have contributed to the success of the programmes.

## QUALITY MATTERS

Because quality does matter it should be fostered and encouraged at all times. During December and January, the following happened:

* Academic Board approved TEAS - Teaching Excellence Awards Scheme.

* College Board approved:

- the FTES - Formative Teaching Evaluation Scheme
- the College Quality Awards
- establishment of a Sub-Committee on Quality Development.

* The closing date for the first submission of projects for grants from the Quality Enhancement Fund.

## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 11 (6pp) 12 April 1994

### MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

In January - 80 were expected for the College Careers Masters Meeting - 102 attended.

In February - over 150 attended the College Seminar at the 1994 Education and Careers Exhibition at the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre.

In February/March - Adeline Lau (College Office) and I visited all of the Technical Institutes to market opportunities for our part-time higher diploma courses - see below.

**Visits to Technical Institutes**

A total of about 40 Principals and Department Heads of the TIs attended these meetings and information kits were distributed for information and discussion. Many suggestions were received and recommendations were made to Divisions and College Board.

**Newspaper Columns - 'Sing Tao Jih Pao'**

In the previous College Memo, details were given about the weekly column 'City Sensitivity' written by public administration & management staff of the HS Division. Another weekly column 'CP Makes Sense' has been launched for a trial period of three months (13 consecutive Saturdays in April to June) in the 'Educational Square'. Each article will be about 800 words and focus on vocational teaching and learning. Special thanks to Serina Lai, Sam Yu, Raymond Wong, Daniel Sun, C C Chau, Kathleen Ng and Daniel Yung for offering to contribute articles.

### STUDENT GUIDES

The Working Group on Student Guides has completed planning for 1994-96 and three Student Guides will be produced:

* Student Guide for First Year Students (FT)
* Student Guide for Part-time Students

- Student Guide for Final Year Students.

### IUT - IMPROVING UNIVERSITY TEACHING

Most of the planning has been completed for CPHK to host the Sixth International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education, 19-21 July 1994. This conference is particularly timely in view of UPGC's interest in such matters.

However ..... now is also the time to start planning for the **20th International Conference on Improving University Teaching, 10-13 July 1995,** which CityU will be hosting in association with the University of Maryland University College.

### COLLEGE DELEGATION TO CHINA

As part of the College's strategic planning, a delegation consisting of the Principal, Heads and two staff members from each of the Division will visit academic institutions, professional associations and state education departments in Beijing during the period 3-8 May 1994. The delegation visit aims:

- to develop links with relevant vocational institutions in China;
- to obtain advice and gather information on the practices of related vocation in China;
- to investigate the possibility of staff/student exchanges;
- to explore the possibility of project placement for students;
- to initiate the franchising of CHVS courses to the China market.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 12 (10pp) 22 September 1994

### THE YEAR AHEAD

The 1994-95 academic year is a special year during which we will become City University of Hong Kong and celebrate our Tenth Anniversary as a higher education institution in Hong Kong. The next ten years promise many opportunities and many achievements. Above all many thousands of students will enrol in our courses and graduate. Our graduates will always be our most important achievement.

### Graduation - 13 & 14 December

In November, all of the HD graduands will graduate under the auspices of the College. This will be a very special occasion for all concerned: students, families and College staff. It will also mark the first students to graduate with the HD in Applied Chinese Studies and the HD in English for Professional Communication.

## PROPOSED REVISION OF JOB SPECIFICATION FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

The revision is prompted by UPGC policy and expectations regarding the work of academic staff and, to some extent, the change of status to university. The role ascribed by the UPGC notes that CityU should (continue to) emphasise the application of knowledge and vocational training; and maintain strong links with industry and employers (UPGC, Nov. 1993). In the same report the UPGC emphasises 'proper scope for intellectual and professional development of academic staff to meet the new teaching challenges'. This is an indication of the 'applied work' (see back page) expected:

> 'professional development will also be achieved in different ways that include consultancy work, scholarship, editorial work, research and publication.'

## PROPOSED PROMOTION SCHEME FOR COLLEGE STAFF

Management Board (16 Sept.) approved, in principle, the introduction of annual promotion opportunities from SL to PL for College staff and equivalent opportunities for Faculty and Administrative staff. The scheme will incorporate the above considerations of applied work (also part of the revised scheme for assessment of staff performance for reappointment and substantiation). There will be opportunity for all staff to comment.

## ADMISSIONS - PRELIMINARY REPORT 1994-95

"In its second year of operation, the JASPIC office received a total of 73,000 applications. Among the 38,000 applicants who submitted the course selection forms to the JASPIC office in mid-July 1994, 11,593 applicants have selected courses offered by CPHK as their first choice, resulting in the CPHK being the most popular institution in the JASPIC exercise. This year, HD Public Administration & Management and HD Accountancy programmes offered by CPHK are ranked the second and third most popular courses respectively, both of which received more than 10,000 applications." (Overseas Chinese Daily News, 17.8.94)

| Institution | Quota (Approx.) | Applicants | App./Quota |
|---|---|---|---|
| HKP | 1,500 | 7,506 | 5.00 |
| **CPHK** | **1,200** | **11,593** | **9.66** |
| Tsing Yi TC | 1,650 | 2,342 | 1.42 |
| Chai Wan TC | 1,650 | 3,709 | 2.25 |
| Seven TIs | 4,600 | 13,358 | 2.90 |
| **TOTAL** | **9,000** | **38,508** | **4.28** |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY PROCESS AUDITS (TLQPA)
## UPGC Seminar, 5 September 1994

On 15 April 1994, the UPGC held a seminar on Teaching and Learning Quality. This is a brief report of a follow-up seminar held to provide opportunity for a further exchange of views among UPGC members and academic staff of the UPGC institutions. The seminar was chaired by Professor Ewbank, UPGC Member and Chairman of the UPGC's Teaching and Learning Quality Sub-Group which will report to the UPGC's Quality Sub-Committee. About 140 attended the seminar including about 40 staff from CPHK.

The aims of the seminar were to provide opportunity for exchange of views on:

(a) Developments with regard to quality assurance, and quality assurance and improvement processes, in the UPGC-funded institutions in the light of the institutions' submission; and

(b) The way forward with regard to the assessment of teaching and learning quality and the UPGC's proposed teaching and learning quality process audits.

By way of introduction the UPGC Chairman, Mr Antony Leung, JP, emphasized the UPGC's interest in quality of teaching. UPGC is seeking advice on how to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and how to relate such evaluation to funding. Teaching and learning quality assessment (TLQA) is still under consideration but it is the UPGC's intention to carry out teaching and learning quality process audits (TLQPA) for the next triennium, 1995-98. For 1994-95, UPGC has set aside funding ($10 million) in the form of a Teaching Development Grant; consideration is being given to distribution and requirements.

Professor Ewbank emphasized the difference of audit from assessment and did not expect the outcomes of audit to be "factored into funding". What UPGC is proposing, is an independent audit of each institution's quality processes and practices in context. TLQPA is likely to be a peer review of quality assurance procedures and the effectiveness of their implementation. Professor Ewbank then invited comment on the following points:

(a) How can institutions keep ownership of quality procedures?
(b) What, if any, are the issues which are peculiar to higher education in Hong Kong?
(c) To what extent and in what way should we use quantitative performance indicators?
(d) What should be the focus of quality review: teaching/learning; staff/student?
(e) What are the implications of peer review?
(f) What are the implications of seeking "continuous improvement" in higher education?
(g) There will be expectations of the outcomes of TLQ process audits, i.e. the outcomes might be "better or worse than expectations".
(h) What are the implications of a "close relationship" between research and teaching?

Given the number of participants and the time available for discussion (about 2 hours), many of the issues could not be explored in any depth. What was certainly clear was the need for definitions of all of the terms used to ensure common understanding: teaching, learning, quality audit, quality assessment and so on. All such terms have been defined in previous issues of the College Memorandum but it was of interest to note that "process" in the context of TLQPA will mean awareness of inputs and outputs.

Pending the outcomes of TLQPA during the 1995-98 triennium, UPGC will decide on the need for TLQ assessment for the 1998-2001 triennium.

## PART-TIME STAFF - NEW RESOURCES

Part-time lecturers are a valuable resource to enrich our staff strength by bringing in knowledge and practical experience from the field. In 1993-94, we employed over 200 part-time lecturers and their recruitment, training and monitoring are important for the work of the College and the course experience of our hundreds of PT students.

Accordingly, a working group on "Multi-media Package for Part-time Lecturers" with representative from each Division and PDU was set up last year to consider the production of a package for part-time lecturers in the College. The package aims to inform our part-time lecturers about the organisation structure of the College; admission, assessment and graduation policies, their responsibilities and the College's support for them. Last but not least is the aim to enhance their teaching skills, particularly for small group teaching in which they are chiefly involved.

The package includes:

(1) an Administrative Handbook for Part-time Lecturers which highlights the structure, policies, provisions of the College and job responsibilities of the part-time lecturers;

(2) a Teaching Handbook which discusses various aspects of small group teaching. These include skills in leading discussion, questioning, explaining, assessment, giving feedback to students and teaching evaluation;

(3) a Reference File will also be kept in the Part-time Lecturers' Room and Library to provide further information on administrative documents and teaching skills.

## STUDENT GUIDES : FT Guide; PT Guide; Final Year Guide

With the favourable feedback from staff and students regarding the innovative Student Guide produced for first-year full-time students in 1992, the Working Group on Student Guides has produced a series of guides viz. Full-time Student Guide (FT Guide), Part-time Student Guide (PT Guide) and Final Year Student Guide (Final Year Guide) with a view to providing appropriate advice and guidance for the three groups of students who have differentiated aims and interests.

Both the **FT Guide** and **PT Guide** are bilingual productions which include information on the benefits of vocational studies, teaching and studying methods, facilities at CityU, advice from current HD students and tips for personal development, etc.

The **Final Year Guide** contains useful information about career planning, job searching, employment opportunities and further study opportunities for HD/D graduates. Unlike the FT and PT Guides which are widely distributed to HD/D students, the FY Guide will be given only to staff members who have responsibilities for final year students.

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## COLLEGE MEMORANDUM 13 (12pp) 13 January 1995

### UGC REVIEW OF SUB-DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Sub-degree programmes are part of a review of development of higher education in Hong Kong, initiated by the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) in a letter (4 November 1994) to UPGC institutions. A subsequent letter (17 November) indicated that the review of sub-degree programmes will have particular reference to:

(a) provision of sub-degree programmes;

(b) demand for manpower at sub-degree level;

(c) quality assurance of sub-degree programmes;

(d) future development of sub-degree programmes; and

(e) feasibility of a credit unit system at sub-degree level.

College Board (4.1.95) has been asked to consider these matters. To promote discussion, here are some considerations in regard to (a), (b), (d) and (e). Quality assurance is well established and has been fully dealt with elsewhere (including previous issues of the College Memorandum).

### COLLEGE PERFORMANCE

During 1993-94, College performance has been outstanding and it is worth noting performance in the following areas.

- Student Evaluation of Teaching
- Student Satisfaction - First Year Students
- Cost Effectiveness
- International Recognition

## Student Evaluation of Teaching

Summaries of mean ratings of overall teaching effectiveness are available for 1993-94, based on the 11-point scale item used in the TEIP form managed by the Professional Development Unit. (For TEIP, this item has been discontinued for 1994-95 and transferred to the new Teaching Feedback Questionnaire for summative evaluation.)

The 11-point scale ranges from 1 [F, Very Poor] to 7 [B, Good] to 11 [A+, Excellent].

During 1993-94, FST was the only Faculty to make significant use of TEIP and the results are presented below for comparison. The *Total Mean* is for all evaluations carried out by PDU - i.e. an institutional norm.

| | **Large Group** | | **Small Group** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | COL | FST | COL | FST |
| **(SEM A)** | | | | |
| No. of Cases | 58 | 61 | 132 | 22 |
| Mean | 6.9 | 6.78 | 7.25 | 5.4 |
| Lowest Mean | 4.9 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.4 |
| Highest Mean | 9.5 | 9.1 | 9.2 | 7.3 |
| ***Total Mean*** | ***(136 cases)*** | ***6.85*** | ***(181 cases)*** | |
| ***6.84*** | | | | |
| **(SEM B)** | | | | |
| No. of Cases | 70 | 101 | 132 | 44 |
| Mean | 7.21 | 6.92 | 7.39 | 7.09 |
| Lowest Mean | 4.1 | 3.5 | 4.4 | 3.8 |
| Highest Mean | 10.0 | 9.6 | 9.9 | 10.0 |
| ***Total Mean*** | ***(198 cases)*** | ***7.04*** | ***(189 cases)*** | |
| ***7.34*** | | | | |

The institutional norm improved from Semester A to Semester B for both large group and small group teaching. In all categories the College mean is higher than the institutional norm.

## Cost Effectiveness

In regard to quality (or excellence), cost effectiveness (cost/FTE) is often used as a performance indicator. The following table summarises the costs/FTE students (indirect, direct and total).

### 1994 Costs per FTE (Annual Financial Report - Council, 23.11.94)

| ($'000) | Indirect | Direct | Ind/Dir | Total | (1993) | FTE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FB | 43 | 69 | 62% | 112 | (91) | 2169 |
| FHS | 44 | 71 | 62% | 115 | (104) | 1808 |
| FLW | 44 | 65 | 68% | 109 | (104) | 653 |
| FST | 57 | 114 | 59% | 171 | (138) | 2562 |
| Faculties | 49 | 84 | 58% | 133 | (112) | 7192 |
| **COL** | **40** | **39** | **103%** | **79** | **(71)** | **3616** |
| CityU | 46 | 69 | 67% | 115 | (100) | 10808 |
| CM | 41 | 37 | 111% | 78 | (66) | 949 |
| HS | 41 | 40 | 103% | 81 | (74) | 1538 |
| TC | 43 | 35 | 123% | 78 | (70) | 1129 |

Note: Total indirect costs are derived from the Polytechnic's total recurrent expenditure less staff costs and on-costs, departmental expenses, teaching equipment and research incurred by academic departments. These are then apportioned to individual departments based on their student load. The expenses for Faculty Laboratory Centre and Faculty/College Office are distributed to the departments within the Faculty/College based on their teaching equipment expenditure and total direct costs respectively.

For further comparison, the corresponding higher diploma costs/FTE for Hong Kong Polytechnic University are shown in the following table.

| | Indirect ($'000) | Direct ($'000) | Ind/Dir | Total ($'000) | (1993) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PolyU** | 54.1 | 62.1 | 87% | 116.2 | (91.2) |
| **CityU(COL)** | 40.0 | 39.0 | 103% | 79.0 | (71) |

## International Recognition

The UGC includes in its Mission Statement that it will support the institutions in 'the provision of appropriate internationally recognized academic programmes........'

### UNN/BTEC

An offer of accreditation for ten HD programmes by the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) of the UK has been received based on an assessment carried out by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN). With minor factual amendments, the Validation Report has been approved by College Board (4.1.95).

If the related agreement proposed by UNN is approved, on fulfilling the Common Skills assessment required by BTEC for all HNDs, HD graduates would be eligible for a separate BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) awarded by UNN. This would be organised on a cost recovery basis with FT students opting to register at the beginning of the second year, and PT students on first enrolment.

A Seminar for Course Leaders was held on 9 January by Mr David Wagstaff, International Business Development, BTEC.

### University of Leeds - HD Translation & Interpretation

There are many examples of international recognition of the quality of our D/HD graduates in the College's new Guide for Final Year Students. This particular example, from Mr Duncan Hunter (PL, HS) is worth noting.

> Dear Mr Hunter,
>
> I should like to express my gratitude to you and your colleagues who, over the past few years, have very kindly agreed to send us letters of reference for those students of yours on the Higher Diploma course in Translation and Interpretation who have applied to do a postgraduate degree in linguistics and phonetics. We greatly depend on you all for a true and realistic account of these candidates, since we cannot possibly ask them to come to Leeds for an interview. Undoubtedly, the training you give your students in the City Polytechnic fully prepares them for our MA courses and we have had very good students coming from your institution. We are therefore always glad to receive applications from your students and are very grateful for your constant co-operation.
>
> From the Department of Linguistics and Phonetics
> University of Leeds, England
> October 19, 1993

### British Computer Society (BCS) - HD Computer Studies

The Registrar of BCS wrote to the Vice-Chancellor in a letter received by the College on 21 December 1994. The BCS Academic Accreditation and Exemptions Committee congratulated the Division of Technology on the HDCS and granted accreditation for Incorporated Engineer (IEng) for the 1993 intake up to the 1997 intake.

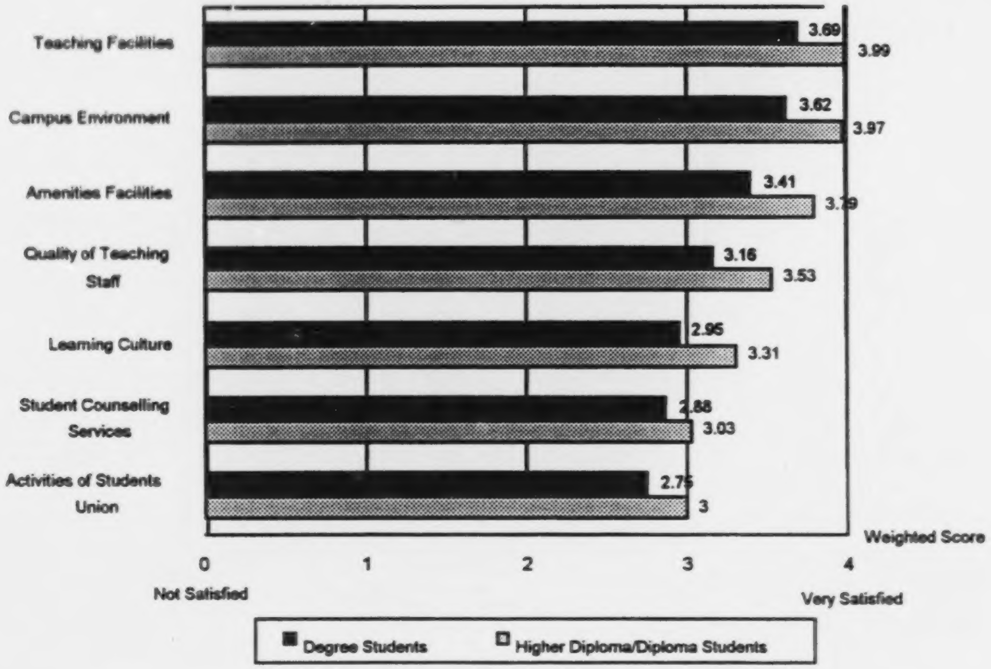
(The BCS is the Chartered Engineering Institution for Information Systems Engineers.)

## Student Satisfaction - Survey of First Year Students (FT), 1994

At the end of October 1994, the External Relations Office conducted a survey of full-time first year students with a view to obtaining useful information for course marketing purposes. As the survey was conducted during lectures and tutorials, relatively high response rates were achieved: 72% and 95% for degree students and higher diploma/diploma students respectively.

The survey indicated that 92% of the HD/D respondents put their enrolled course as the first choice in their JASPIC application. 'Satisfaction' is often used as a proxy of quality when the views of students (also graduates and employers) are sought. When asked about satisfaction with CityU, HD/D respondents were more satisfied than degree respondents on all of the items as shown below, the biggest differences being 'quality of teaching staff' and 'learning culture'.

Satisfaction with City University by Degree and HD/D Students



In general, students are 'more than satisfied'. Since the majority of HD/D respondents enrolled in first choice courses, this could influence their feelings of 'satisfaction'.

# Annual Reports
# (Extracts)

## REPORTING THE COLLEGE - ANNUALLY

Each year, it is a legal requirement for the University to publish an annual report approved by Council. In this regard, it is a professional responsibility for the College's annual report to be prepared by the Principal for approval by the College Board. The submitted report is usually edited before appearing in the University's Annual Report. This section presents extracts from the College's contributions to the Annual Report.

### CPHK Annual Report 1991-92

The College was established on 1 January 1991 with a special mandate to co-ordinate higher diploma and diploma courses. A large proportion of its initial staff represented staff who transferred from the Faculties.

The restructuring of four Higher Diploma courses (in Accountancy, in Business Studies, in Applied Chinese Studies, and in English for Professional Communication) and revalidation of one course (in Translation and Interpretation) were successfully completed during the year. This involved considerable staff time and effort as an investment in the quality of education and training, to which the College is committed. The remaining courses will be restructured during 1992-93.

Five Course Advisory Committees were established in early 1992. These provide valuable input to the planning and administration of courses. The expertise and experience of external members of the committees, particularly of their chairpersons who are all leading figures in their own fields, ensure that courses are vocationally relevant to the needs of Hong Kong.

Faced with keen competition from other local tertiary institutions and the two newly established technical colleges of the Vocational Training Council, the College has used vigorous marketing strategies to attract quality students. A video, an electronic prospectus, calligraphy and leaflets were distributed to secondary schools. Four Careers Masters' Meetings were held in March and May 1992, attracting 150 teachers from different schools. A *Student Guide* for new students was prepared.

### CPHK Annual Report 1992-93

The College aims to provide programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers and the community of Hong Kong. It entered its second full year of operation in 1992-93 and during the year moved into its permanent accommodation in Phase II of the campus. This has strengthened the College's identity and improved the morale of staff.

As the largest academic unit in the Polytechnic, the College's student population grew to 3,313 full-time equivalent (FTE) students from 2,916 in 1991-92, accounting for about 33% of the total student population. Staff establishment was 242, including 176 academic staff. In response to Government indications, the College revised certain enrolment targets; in particular the student intake for the full-time Diploma in Social Work was increased from 100 to 185. The overall student numbers will continue to increase to meet the UPGC target for 1994-95, of 37% of the Polytechnic's FTE students.

The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences is the largest academic department in the Polytechnic with over 100 staff, and will continue to grow. In due course it is hoped that approval will be given for the Division to be split into two Divisions - one for language studies and one for social studies.

At the end of the 1992-93 academic year, the first Polytechnic students graduated under the new College organization, coming from the two-year Diploma in Social Work course and the three-year Higher Diploma in Computer Studies respectively.

The first new College course, the Higher Diploma in Banking and Financial Services, was developed and validated for introduction in 1993-94, with a three-year programme for both the full-time and part-time modes. During the year, the College had five Higher Diploma courses reviewed and revalidated: Architectural Studies; Building; Building Surveying; Building Services Engineering; Public and Social Administration - renamed Public Administration and Management. Finally, two courses - Diploma in Social Work and Higher Diploma in Computer Studies - were restructured for the new semester format of the academic year.

Course validation and revalidation are required procedures to maintain the quality of courses. To deliver these courses and manage student learning, professional and motivated staff are essential. Special emphasis is placed on excellence in teaching, and seminars were organized as part of the development of formative evaluation procedures. Principles and models to provide a framework for appraisal for professional development were also developed.

The College continued to develop its marketing strategy. Four School Visit Programmes were organized and were attended by 1,090 students from 52 schools. During the same period, a School Liaison Programme was also implemented, in which staff and students acted as the College's ambassadors and visited 29 secondary schools to promote its courses. In March 1993, 65 careers teachers participated in two Careers Staff Meetings. The College has now established contact with nearly half of the full-time secondary schools in Hong Kong. Marketing materials, including a new college video, were improved and new materials produced in support of the above activities.

As a result of these marketing efforts, the number of first choice applications for College courses increased to 25,777 in 1992-93 from 20,112 in 1991-92 (up 28.5%), and the application-to-places ratio also rose to 22.4:1 from 21.9:1, notwithstanding an overall increased intake from 920 to 1,150, not reflected in the ratios.

The Polytechnic, through the College, has an interest in promoting the higher diploma to students, teachers, parents, employers and society generally, as the most important vocational qualification in Hong Kong. For such purposes, a comprehensive review of the standing and standard of the Higher Diploma was carried out in the College. Discussions were held with relevant organizations and Government departments to develop perceptions of the higher diploma qualification with the aim of improving career opportunities for higher diploma graduates.

The College has established itself as the leading provider of three-year full-time Higher Diploma courses in Hong Kong. It looks forward to providing quality courses and quality graduates who will contribute significantly to Hong Kong's productivity and to economic and social development. As such, it will continue to play a major role in developing the reputation of Polytechnic.

## CPHK Annual Report 1993-94

Now in its third year of operation, the College continues to provide programmes of higher vocational studies leading to Higher Diploma (HD) and Diploma (D) qualifications. These HD and D programmes prepare capable graduates for employment at supervisory levels in the industrial and commercial sectors throughout Hong Kong.

The College remains the largest academic unit in the Polytechnic, with a total full-time equivalent (FTE) student population of 3,804, representing 35% of the Polytechnic's FTE students, and a growth of 15% from the previous year. This year also marks the first cohort of graduates of the HD Applied Chinese Studies and the HD English for Professional Communication.

A new course, HD Banking & Financial Services, was introduced and the HD Computer Studies (HDCS) was successfully revalidated for implementation from 1994-95. The HDCS was also accredited by the British Council Society (BCS) for professional exemption and, in a laudatory move, the BCS subsequently granted Incorporated Engineer status to all HDCS graduates and exemption from its Part I examination.

The College arranged for assessment of ten HD/D programmes by the UK Business & Technology Education Council (BTEC). A team from the University of Northumbria at Newcastle, authorized to act on behalf of BTEC, were very positive in its report on the College's programmes.

To ensure the recruitment of quality students, marketing strategies for HD and D programmes continue to be developed by the College. Three school visit programmes were attended by 1,854 students from 181 secondary schools, with 226 teachers present at the Teachers' Meeting. A Diploma in Social Work Day was launched with the aim of recruiting students who would be dedicated to the profession. The College has also established contacts with the seven Technical Institutes. Two weekly columns in a leading local newspaper act as a forum for College staff to share ideas on vocational education issues.

Through project work, students have developed independent learning and transferable skills, demonstrating their potential to prospective employers in business and industry. Three final year project exhibitions were organized: HD Computer Studies, HD English for Professional Communication, and one for all building-related HD programmes.

# Submissions

*A submission to the Strategy Working Group of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (UK), October 1992.*

## ENGINEERING : PROFESSIONAL AND VOCATIONAL

### Summary

This submission has two principal aims. The first is to draw attention to the need to promote the standing of the engineer at the technician level corresponding to the Engineering Council's registration category of Incorporated Engineer. The submission discusses the implications of the name and the vocational qualifications required. The implications include the standing of diploma-level qualifications noting that professions require degree-level qualifications.

The second aim is to suggest some goals. Details are given in the submission - in summary these are proposed as:

1. development of a marketing strategy which identifies 'audiences', selects targets, develops strong 'messages', uses publications and publicity, and evaluates outcomes;
2. complementary development of public relations and image;
3. promotion of engineering education: at school level for future recruitment; at tertiary level with industry support for co-operative education; at membership level through networks with IMechE recognition and support;
4. further development of international outreach, utilising networks which have already been established such as the British Council.

### Preamble

In August, on the way to the Conference of the International Vocational Education and Training Association in Thailand, I noted some of the issues identified by Michael Neale with reference to the strategy study presented to Council (Engineering News August 1992). The theme of the conference was "The Emerging Challenges in Vocational Education and Human Resources Development" and it seemed to me that the opening speaker touched on a number of issues related to the aims of the Strategy Working Group, as indicated by the following quotations:

> "... increased co-operation between higher education and industry with a view to ... improving the quality of education which should be able to adjust rapidly and spontaneously to scientific and technological progress." (p2)
>
> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education can be the first step on a ladder to further education and/or a rewarding and lucrative career." (p3)

> "As a nation tries to improve the quality of manpower to ensure economic growth and development goals, it should be noted that the success of the newly industrialised countries in Asia is usually correlated with high level of investment in quality education and training." (p5)

The speaker was HE Professor Dr Kasem Suwanagul, Deputy Prime Minister and Ministry of University Affairs, The Kingdom of Thailand.

**Introduction**

The above issues will be discussed further in this submission, in conjunction with the following considerations taken from the Engineering News article, as follows:

1. The strategy group took for one of its basic tenets, that a new central body will concern itself with
    - (a) the qualification of engineers
    - (b) the definition of professional codes of conduct and practice
    - (c) the recruitment of new young people to the engineering profession
    - (d) the expression of the views of engineers with government and the general public.
2. "First and foremost the IMechE must concentrate on excellence in engineering technology."
3. "Clearly the (strategy working) group is concerned with the setting of goals."
4. "If a central body gives a basic qualification a seal of competence, like "CEng", what use does an engineer have for his (or her) MIMechE?"

**Definitions** (Attachment 1)

For strategy development, definitions may need to be reviewed to ensure that there is an appropriate level of common understanding by the "stakeholders". In general, the bodies which award the academic and professional qualifications, exist to serve the needs of employers of engineers - at their various levels. Consideration should be given to the meaning of professional and professionalism, even professionality? Is it too limiting to talk about professional competence or competencies rather than capability (capabilities)?

The Engineering Council's Policy Statement 'Standards and Routes to Registration' (2nd ed., 1990) specifies registration categories together with engineering qualification standards (academic qualifications only), as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chartered Engineer (CEng) | - accredited degree in engineering |
| Incorporated Engineer (IEng) | - BTEC Higher National Certificate of Diploma |
| Engineering Technician (EngTech) | - BTEC National Certificate |

The Policy Statement notes:

> "The problem of definition of the various levels of engineer is complicated by the fact that in practice there is no hard and fast line between the kind of work undertaken by those in the different grades."

The definition, however, as with other vocational areas, draws the line in regard to the academic qualification required, regardless of level of responsibility. As noted by Goy (1992), one of the reasons for the change o name of the professional engineering section to the chartered engineering section of the Register, was to avoid implying that other categories were in some way not 'professional'. The term Technologist is not one which has been defined within the Engineering Council.

It will be argued that the professional (or vocational) label 'incorporated engineer' is not meaningful and should be changed as part of a strategy which will give more emphasis to an important middle level which I will refer to as the diploma engineer (DipEng?) and, more generally, as senior level vocational personnel.

## Strategy Issues

The strategy issues addressed in this submission include:

(a) The qualifications, education and training of professional and vocational engineers, chartered and diploma engineers.

(b) Professional practice and professional development.

(c) Recruitment of new young people.

(d) Goals for the IMechE (as part of a central body).

## Qualifications

'If a central body gives a basic qualification a seal of competence ....'? Presumably the qualification then indicates certain levels of competencies representing a minimum standard - as suggested in the definition of a professional.

Notwithstanding the importance of competency(ies), capability seems to be a stronger and more useful set of attributes including competency (see definitions). A definition (EUSEC, 1975) of a professional engineer includes a sentence particularly relevant to this concept:

> "His (or her) education will have been such as to make him (or her) capable of closely and continuously following progress in a branch of engineering science by consulting newly published work on a world-wide basis, assimilating such information and applying it independently."

Another example is taken from the introduction to the mission statement of a school of engineering (Cole and Messerle, 1988):

> "and engineers are needed, not just with an expanding range of knowledge but also with the capability to keep those skills current in a changing world."

If the seal of competence for CEng assumes that a prerequisite is a degree (in engineering) this is consistent with the use of the adjective professional. The 'incorporated engineer' (previously technician engineer) level of professional qualification is at sub-degree level, e.g. Higher National Diploma hence diploma engineer.

I believe that 'incorporated engineer' will have little or no meaning to non-engineering bodies and to the public, including parents and teachers of potential diploma-level students. If the package is to be sold (and it needs to be) then the label must be changed. There is an urgent economic infrastructure need for vocational diplomas as 'seal of approval' qualifications for senior level vocational personnel.

For productivity and performance, the minimum estimated requirement is two diploma engineers for one degree or chartered engineer. With other vocational fields (accountancy, computing, public and social administration) the requirements will vary.

## Education and Training

The chartered or professional engineer needs a degree to be eligible for this description and much has been written about the education and training of the graduate or degree engineer. Much less has been written about the diploma engineer qualified for registration as technician or incorporated engineer. There is much less public awareness and appreciation of the significance of the diploma qualification and related education and training.

The academic qualification in the UK is the Higher National Diploma (HND) - in Hong Kong it is the Higher Diploma (HD). In the context of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), the HND is rated at 240 points, against the degree at 360 points. The professional recognition of the linkage between the HND and degree is not so straightforward since professional engineering bodies are putting more emphasis on the 'integrity' of the single degree course (particularly years 2 and 3 of the three year honours degree) than on satisfactory completion of the final year only, whether reached by direct HND entry or credit accumulation in different places/countries. As noted by Renwick (1981).

> "There is the possibility of conflict of interest between the professional aspirations of the associations that will be seeking to advance the interests of their occupations and others who will be called upon the advise on how best to provide courses of vocational education for particular groups."

Professional associations (law, medicine, engineering) are seeking not only to influence syllabuses and assessment but also to restrict recognition of the qualification by requiring the final two-thirds to be completed as part of one course.

Training may, of course, be integrated with academic study and the most effective model is that of co-operative education (refer Attachment 1) - known in the UK as sandwich education and training.

The structure of courses overall will generally be modular in the future and educational technology will be required for quality outcomes - as discussed by Imrie (1988). Within a module a structure for learning and for relationships of assessment within learning, will also be required and such a structure has been discussed by Sparkes (1989) with particular emphasis on 'understanding'. A different structure has been proposed by Imrie derived from the 'original' taxonomy established by Bloom et al (1956). The concept of understanding needs careful consideration, as noted in a recent letter to 'Engineering News' (Hunt, 1992).

> "My own experience suggests that understanding implies a far deeper awareness of concepts and relationships between theory and practice than can possibly be achieved during any three or four year course."
>
> "Perhaps, therefore, the word in question might be replaced by 'appreciation'. This gives broader license and tends to dilute the 'specifics' implied by 'understanding'.
>
> After all, with reasonable intelligence and a lot of practice, plus an element of fortune, all things are possible in examinations - certainly without understanding but not without a degree of appreciation!"

However, the following implications for the interacting relationships among teaching, learning and assessment, need to be considered very carefully.

> "Some of the most profoundly depressing research on learning in higher education has demonstrated that successful performance in examinations does not even indicate that students have a good grasp of the very concepts which staff members believed the examinations to be testing." (Boud, 1990)

'Structure' should also be applied to post-qualification training and work experience. In this regard the experiential taxonomy (Steinaker & Bell, 1979) is particularly appropriate.

In summary, pedagogical structure should be used systematically for professional/vocational educational and training with quality assurance of assessment (used professionally) for capability outcomes. If the outcomes are those of capability then knowledge, understanding and skills will be transferable thus guaranteeing the effectiveness of linkages between modules and among institutions. This will ensure the credibility, nationally and internationally, of the degree representing outcomes.

**Professional Practice/Vocational Recognition**

Regardless of the level of the tertiary qualification (diploma or degree) there are areas of study in universities which can readily be identified as 'vocational'. For professional practice, however, professional status or qualification requires a degree. Attachment 1 gives definitions related to 'profession'.

A goal for the strategy working group should be to establish a clear identity for vocational level qualifications and status.

## Recruitment

Recruitment of new young people will require a marketing strategy. Marketing requires (attractive) definition of the product, definition of the audience and creative ways of communication to develop awareness, interest and response.

Recruitment also requires an appropriate pool of young people. Much consideration has been given to such issues as gender representation, attitudes and prerequisite ability - particularly in mathematics; also the shortage of mathematics and physics teachers (Engineering Council, 1986). There is evidence that enduring negative attitudes towards mathematics occur at the age of about 7 or 8, as a result of primary school experience. For example, in New Zealand, Clark and Vere-Jones (1987) comment on primary school children faced with teachers who are unable to explain mathematical concepts and procedures: 'the danger is that the children will learn from their teachers only the attitudes that go with them'. Related considerations are discussed (Imrie, 1987) and a strategy identified, as follows:

> "He (Harpham) considers that educational technology and information technology are sufficiently advanced to design, present and deliver modules to meet the needs of individual students in urban or rural areas throughout NZ. He proposes task groups of subject specialists working with appropriate educationalists, industrialists and information technologists to prepare high quality teaching materials, eg. in mathematics.
>
> In the UK, the Information Technology Development Unit (ITDU) is pioneering the use of advanced information technology at all levels of learning.
>
> 'By combining experienced teaching staff with extensive expertise in the latest technologies, significant advances in training programmes for both industry and education are being developed.' (ITDU 1987)
>
> Classroom teachers would be trained in the management of these materials and of the assessment procedures, in itself a form of retraining for all teachers. The outcome would be equitable in that, regardless of the location of the school or the parental income, a high quality minimum standard of teaching would be available."

The investment would be readily available from the obvious consortium of interest: government, industry and producers (given the marketability of the learning packages overseas where similar problems exist but on a larger scale).

Such a strategy could introduce industry applications, a priority area identified in the review of vocational qualifications (Tolley, 1985). If teachers have degrees and do not have workplace vocational (or professional) experience, it is unlikely that they will develop positive attitudes in young people, towards future vocational study and career. These positive attitudes should include:

* recognition of diploma, as well as degree, qualifications as being worthwhile for capability, confidence and career development;

* motivation based on the vitally important social responsibilities of people involved in engineering for the well-being of society;

* awareness of the crucial contributions that engineering makes to productivity and to the development of sustainable economies.

In his social history of engineering, Armytage (1961) notes (referring to engineers):

> **"Their strategic position between the endless frontiers of new knowledge on the one hand, and the equipment provided by success on the other, enable them to act as the most effective revolutionists of our time."**

On education for capability Burgess (1986) notes:

> **"The characteristics of engineering problems - the transformation from one state of affairs to another - are characteristics of all real world practical problems."**

Initiatives elsewhere are relevant. Co-operative education is strongly established in Canada, at school and at tertiary level. The 1992 Canadian Vocational Association conference considered the Canadian Restructured School Plan - 'an innovative approach for providing vocational/career training in the secondary school system'.

## Goals for the Institution

As part of a (new) central body, the aims should include the following considerations:

1. Development of a marketing strategy involving

    * the careful use of words which the 'audience' will understand (e.g. engineering-engineer; engineering technology - technologist);

    * a better description than 'incorporated engineer' of the vocational opportunity at diploma level, together with a strong message of the importance of this category;

2. Public Relations and Image

    Complementing marketing, PR has similar and related considerations - message, audience, strategy. The audience will include public, government and employers. Again, what is needed is a proactive and vigorous strategy, for example:

    * 'Good news' stories prepared for press release every week - written in the form which meets the audience requirements;

    * selection of role models;

    * development of 'teaching' contributions to schools by engineering undergraduates;

    * visits by newly graduated engineers to school of origin;

* TV and video entertainment (education, awareness).

In this last regard, young men and women (at school) are directly influenced by TV and video - no longer are books (novels) read to stimulate imagination. Engineering must be sold for its excitement, satisfaction, achievement and world importance, through the appropriate media. Plays, films, serials, even soap operas could be used creatively to reach the audience needed.

3. Promotion of engineering education - at school level for future recruitment, at tertiary level with industry support for co-operative education, at professional level through networks with IMechE recognition and support, including:

* IMechE membership of the World Association for Co-operative Education;

* Establishment of a UK Association for Engineering Education along the lines of the Australasian Association for Engineering Education or the Association of Engineering Education of South East Asia;

* Analysis of the papers of the World Congress on Engineering Education;

* Response to the UNESCO Convention for Vocational Education;

* Recognition of Credit Accumulation and Transfer for professional /vocational membership with reference to national vocational qualifications.

In particular this means revising concepts of the required integrity of a three year honours degree. Perhaps the concept of the 2+2 degree structure could include the HND as an associate degree. At present NVQ recognises the HND as being 'worth' 240 points and the degree 360 points.

* Development of maths/physics multi-media materials for schools - with an engineering/industry message.

4. International Outreach

This should be proactive and vigorous. There is excellent potential through the British Council to reach out to support (and influence) appropriate vocational /professional engineering education in third world and newly industrialised countries.

* China is a particular example already targeted by City and Guilds; Indonesia is another large part of Southeast Asia where engineering will be vital for the future.

* UNESCO is sponsoring major projects and IMechE should seek to develop major initiatives in engineering education in partnership with such organisations, also OECD, World Bank, Asia Development Fund, etc.

- Europe and the many new emergent countries and economies also present opportunities.

- On a cost recovery basis, IMechE could establish a network of annual national conferences on engineering (including engineering education). Once the conference 'mode' is established in partnership with the appropriate representative bodies, then the process becomes one of management. Such national conferences will address the needs and achievements of the country and be more accessible by virtue of minimising the time and financial costs associated with international conferences.

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**DEFINITIONS** Attachment 1

## Professionalism

(1) Professionalism serves to maintain the standards of performance of the task by developing expertise, autonomy, commitment and responsibility among practitioners in significant areas of human endeavour.

(2) "The essence of professionalism is the belief that the individual is the true unit of service, because service depends on individual qualities and individual judgement, supported by an individual responsibility which cannot be shifted on to the shoulders of others."[1]

## Profession[2]

"A profession is an occupation which performs a crucial social function.

The exercise of this function requires a considerable degree of skill.

This skill is exercised in situations which are not wholly routine.

Thus, although knowledge gained through experience is important, this recipe-type knowledge is insufficient to meet professional demands and the practitioner has to draw on a body of systematic knowledge.

The acquisition of this body of knowledge and the development of specific skills requires a lengthy period of higher education.

This period of education and training also involves the process of socialization into professional values.

These values tend to centre on the pre-eminence of clients' interests and to some degree they are made explicit in a code of ethics.

Because knowledge-based skills are exercised in non-routine situations it is essential for the professional to have the freedom to make his or her own judgements with regard to appropriate practice."

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[1] Hardie Boys, M 'Professionalism - and the Law' New Zealand Engineering 34, 10, 1979.

[2] Hoyle, E 'Professional Development in an Uncertain World' Keynote Speech Seventh Regional Conference of Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration, Hong Kong, August 1992.

## Professionalism[2]

"*Professionalism* - a term used here to denote the process whereby an occupation seeks to move towards greater professional status by increasingly meeting the alleged criteria. The ideology, rhetoric and associated strategies deployed to achieve this end will be referred to here as *professionalism*. This is to be distinguished from *professionality* which is used to convey the knowledge, skills and values entailed in service to clients and is enhanced by the process of *professional development*. Professionalism and professionality may go hand in hand but this may not always be the case."

## A Competent Professional[3]

"A *competent* professional has the attributes necessary for job performance to the appropriate standards.

This definition includes three key elements:

(i) *attributes*, (ii) *performance*, and (iii) *standards*. The following sub-paragraphs explain these elements.

(i) The competence of professionals derives from their possessing a set of relevant *attributes* such as knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes. These attributes which jointly underlie competence are often referred to as *competencies*. So a *competency* is a combination of attributes underlying some aspect of successful professional performance.

(ii) Competence is focused on *performance* of a *role* or set of *tasks*. Within professions there are typically various *roles* e.g. hospital pharmacist, design engineer, history teacher, etc. Roles comprise a multitude of *tasks*, which can be further divided into sub-tasks. Some tasks are relatively general, others are relatively specific.

(iii) Since the performance of a role and its associated tasks can be judged competent or incompetent, competence requires that the performance be of an appropriate standard. Hence we need *standards* against which competence can be assessed and validated. Important issues concern the *minimal level of performance* that will be judged *competent* for a role or task and the criteria that will be used to judge whether this *standard* has been achieved.

When all this is done for a range of areas of practice within a profession, the result is a set of *competency-based standards* for the profession."

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[3] Hager, P 'Competency Standards and Professional Performance' Fourth IVETA International Conference, Thailand, August 1992.

## Capability[4]

"A capability curriculum provides for individual educational experience and motivation with regard to four **capabilities** integrated or 'operating in harmony'. Learners want:

- to improve their **competence** by the practice of skills and the use of knowledge;
- to **cope** better with their own lives and the problems that confront them and society;
- to develop their **creative** abilities and, above all,
- to **co-operate** with other people."

## Co-operative Education[5]

"Co-operative education includes the following essential (and overlapping) features:

(a) It is a strategy of applied learning.

(b) It involves a structured programme developed and supervised by an educational institution in collaboration with one or more employing organisations.

(c) Relevant productive work is an integral part of a student's regular academic programme and an essential component of the final assessment.

(d) The programme normally commences and terminates with the academic period.

(e) The work experience component involves productive work and comprises a reasonable proportion of the total programme.

(f) At whatever level programmes are offered, they maintain excellence."

## **Incorporated Engineers**[6] (previously Technician Engineers)

"Incorporated Engineers perform technical duties of an established or novel character either independently or under the general direction of more senior engineers. They require the power of logical thought and, when in a management role, the qualities of leadership and effective control.

Fundamentally the nature of the posts occupied by Incorporated Engineers is such as to demand a practical approach and a detailed understanding of a particular technology. They require specific and detailed knowledge of the bases and practices of current existing technology efficiently. They also need communication skills and awareness of the environment beyond the limits of their specific responsibility.

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[4] Flower, F 'Towards Capability' Ch13 in Burgess, T (Ed) Education for Capability, Windsor: NFER-Nelson, 1986.

[5] Definition adopted by the World Council and Assembly on Co-operative Education, 1987.

[6] Policy Statement on Standards and Routes to Registration, The Engineering Council, London, 1988.

Incorporated Engineers provide, either independently or as leaders, the most satisfactory service possible through existing resources and so exercise a significant influence on the overall effectiveness of the organisation in which they work.

Incorporated Engineers must, therefore, be competent by virtue of their education, training and experience:

(i) to exercise technical judgement in an assume responsibility for duties in the engineering field;

(ii) to understand, by the application of general principles and established techniques, the reasons for and the purposes of the operations for which they are responsible;

(iii) to be aware of the business, management, safety, social and economic context of their work both within the organisation and in the wider environment."

*Submission on higher vocational education to the Governor of Hong Kong, The Right Honourable Christopher Patten.*

## GOVERNOR'S ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE 1992/93 SESSION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, 7 OCTOBER 1992

## PROPOSALS: VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

### Introduction

I refer to the proposals which you have set out as an agenda and write to draw your attention to issues regarding education and, in particular, to higher level vocational education. The relevant paragraphs of your Address are:

151. We shall be a community in which:
    - almost 6 out of 10 families own their own homes;
    - almost one in five of those aged 17 to 20 will be studying for degrees.

29. As a result of these measures, there will be about 780 additional teachers next year and a further 1,420 by 1997. This increase will reduce the ratio of pupils to teachers:
    - from 27 to 24 in primary schools, and
    - from 22 to 20 in secondary schools,

    between now and 1997.

30. Our teachers are at the heart of the education system, and so we will be taking early action to improve their training and education. As soon as possible in the new year, we will set up a Provisional Governing Council for the proposed new Institute of Education and make other interim improvements. The Council will be given the task of planning the Institute's development into an independent body offering certificate and, in due course, degree qualifications. And we will encourage the tertiary institutions to develop courses to enable serving teachers to upgrade their qualifications. The Open Learning Institute has a major contribution to make to this process, and we propose to provide a capital grant of $150 million to help it acquire its own building. We shall also be taking steps to increase the proportion of qualified teachers in kindergartens by improving the fee remission scheme.

I have assumed conventional distinctions between training and education, vocational and academic, and I fully endorse your statements relating to investment in training and education for productivity in Hong Kong. Higher vocational education is crucial for productivity to sustain economic and social development.

### A Matter of Degree

151. '- almost one in five of those aged 17 to 20 will be studying for degrees.' (p42)

Please note the following considerations:

(a) There is no mention of vocational education or of the highest vocational qualification, the higher diploma[1], in any of your proposals for the future of Hong Kong. (I accept that teacher education is a particular form of vocational education and will discuss this later.)

(b) For the future of Hong Kong, a strong case can be made that senior vocational (SV) personnel qualified with the higher diploma, will be at least as important as graduates for productivity, and for economic and social development. SV personnel are a vital part of the infrastructure which is essential for sustainable development.

(c) The UPGC has developed two polytechnics with the role of offering a range of programmes with a strong emphasis on professional and vocational education, the latter at the 'sub-degree' level with about 35% of the enrolment. For the first time, starting in 1993-94, VTC will enrol students for a wide range of higher diploma courses.

(d) In contrast to degree (and academic education), the higher diploma (vocational education) has a low and often non-existent profile in terms of public and government awareness. For example in the Government's yearbook 'Hong Kong 1992', the chapter on 'Education' mentioned higher diploma only once but there were many references to degrees and degree courses.

Another example is the chapter on education in 'The Other Hong Kong Report 1992'. The word 'vocational' (in quotes as shown) appears twice only: once with reference to Hong Kong University, and once with reference to Chinese University! Not once is there a reference to the Vocational Training Council, the polytechnics or, indeed, the higher diploma.

(e) This is also an international problem. All countries need the vocational qualifications and infrastructure discussed: third world countries (eg Thailand), newly industrialised countries (eg Singapore), and industrialised countries (UK).

Some quotes illustrate the problem. The first comes from the opening speech at an international conference[2], by His Excellency Professor Dr Kasem Suwanagul, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of University Affairs, Thailand:

> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education, either at the secondary or postsecondary level, can be the first step on the ladder to further education and/or a rewarding and lucrative career."

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[1] The higher diploma is awarded after successful completion of a three year full-time course with the principal entry level post Fifth Form with HKCEE passes.

[2] International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA), Bangkok/Pattaya, August 1992.

The second comes from the first leader of a recent issue of the 'Times Higher' (30.10.92),

> "Within higher education cachet attaches to degrees. These are known and internationally recognised qualifications which put their holders into the different, esteemed category of 'graduate'.
>
> Lower level qualifications including diplomas and certificates have never achieved the same universal recognition. Constantly changed, offered by a plethora of different bodies, their currency has been uncertain and public confidence shaky."

and, on the front page of a previous issue (16.10.92), it was noted:

> "Heads of the new universities have attacked suggestions that they are deliberately trying to phase out their non-degree work now that they have been elevated to university status. They say that demand from students, parents and headteachers, as well as from some employers, is for honours degrees rather than for the vocational two year diploma and certificate courses.
>
> Geoff Pike, of the Institute of Manpower Studies, said: 'In the United Kingdom there is a sufficient supply of graduate level manpower, an insufficient supply of manpower qualified to HND or intermediate level. What happens is that employers are forced to use graduates to undertake jobs suited to people with intermediate skills. One result is an apparent shortage of graduate manpower."

Proposal

The proposal is that your Government gives strong support to the provision of senior vocational personnel, across all disciplines, qualified at the level of higher diploma; also that the higher diploma is identified and promoted strongly as the vocational alternative to the (academic) degree.

Note: This year's Form 5 students who enrol in higher diploma courses in 1993, will complete higher diplomas in 1996; their classmates who stay on for Form 7 and then enrol for degree courses in 1995, will complete degrees in 1998. In my view, Hong Kong needs the best students to acquire vocational qualifications to sustain economic and social development.

### Schools as Preparation for Tertiary Education

Paras 29 and 30 emphasise considerable and rapid growth in the provision of teachers; also action to improve training and education both pre-service and in-service. Some particular vocational and productivity considerations include:

- Very few teachers have experience or understanding of business, industry or technology[3]; their attitudes are influenced accordingly and, in turn, influence pupils.

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[3] Technology is defined as the generic knowledge and skill needed to design a specific product or process.

- *In a report*[4] *of a recent survey* by The Engineering Council, engineering companies, professional engineering institutions and educationalists supported the call 'to improve the teaching of technology in schools and make the subject more relevant to the needs of business and industry'.

- Mathematics is also an important language for vocational education and technology but there is considerable evidence, internationally, to show that this is one of the weakest areas at the primary school level.

- As indicated in your address, the involvement of the Open Learning Institute will be crucial but there is still the problem of ensuring that good quality content and examples are used by all teachers.

  This is the key issue. As with mathematics, if the teacher has limited experience and, correspondingly, little enthusiasm for technology and industry, then the pupils will be affected by poor explanations and negative attitudes.

Proposal

The proposal is based on the consideration that educational technology and information technology are sufficiently advanced to design, present and deliver modules to meet the needs of individual students throughout Hong Kong.

Groups of subject specialists working with appropriate educationalists, industrialists and information technologists, should be established to prepare high quality teaching materials, eg in mathematics.

Note: (1) In the UK, the Information Technology Development Unit (ITDU) is pioneering the use of advanced information technology at all levels of learning.

"By combining experienced teaching staff with extensive expertise in the latest technologies, significant advances in training programmes for both industry and education are being developed." (ITDU 1987)

(2) Classroom teachers would be trained in the management of these materials and of the assessment procedures, in itself a form of retaining for all teachers. The outcome would be equitable in that, regardless of the location of the school or the parental income, a high quality minimum standard of teaching would be available."

(3) The products and the strategy would be marketable to China and to other countries in South East Asia which have the same problems.

(4) The required expertise is available in the Educational Technology Centre, City Polytechnic.

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[4] "'Back to basics' for technology teaching" Newsletter, The Engineering Council, p11, Issue 16, October 1992.

*This critical appraisal (1 June 1992) of the functions of the College of Higher Vocational Studies was requested as part of the preparation for the UPGC's Institutional Review in January 1993. Appendices are not included.*

## UPGC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

## CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES (1991-92)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 History of the College of Higher Vocational Studies

The introduction of the College into the structure of the Polytechnic was essentially a reorganisation of existing activities. The proposal arose as a direct result of the decision to expand the provision of first year first degree places at the Polytechnic. The overall aim was to enable the Polytechnic to achieve true parity with the universities, through the Faculties, whilst ensuring that proper attention be paid to the development of higher diploma and diploma (HD/D) courses as the responsibility of the College.

The proposal to establish the College was reported to the UPGC in a letter (7.6.90) from Council. In his letter (22.10.90), the UPGC Chairman invited the Polytechnic to report to the Committee the arrangements to set up a College specifically for sub-degree programmes and particularly about the implied need for a different salary scale (see 2.4) for academic staff solely engaged in teaching sub-degree programmes[5].

The College came into existence, formally, on 1 January 1991 so that new students could be registered for the 1991-92 academic year with its three Divisions: Commerce; Humanities & Social Sciences; Technology. Existing students continued to be registered through their current departments which had been organised (1.10.90) into three Faculties: Business; Humanities & Social Sciences; Science & Technology.

Pending the appointments of the Principal and the Heads of Division, the following appointments were made to manage the implementation of the College structure:

| | |
|---|---|
| Acting Principal: | Mr John Dockerill, Associate Director (Resources) |
| Vice Principal: | Mr Thomas Wu, General Secretary (2-year secondment) |
| College Secretary: | Ms Annie Tam, Academic Secretary's Office (secondment) |

With the transfer of 10 higher diploma courses and one diploma course (see 1.2) from the departments, staff were invited to apply for transfer to the College, either at their current level of appointment or on promotion. This transitional arrangement ended on 30 June

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[5] Report to the University & Polytechnics Grants Committee on the Establishment of the College of Higher Vocational Studies, January 1991; part of the documentation for the UPGC'S Academic Review Visit (9-10 January 1991).

1992, the closing date for lateral (only) transfer applications to receive priority for positions in the College.

By the end of March 1991, the following new management appointments had been made:

| | |
|---|---|
| Principal: | Mr Bradford W Imrie (1.8.91) |
| Heads of Division: | |
| - Commerce: | Mr T K Ghose (1.11.91) |
| - Humanities: & Social Sciences | Mrs Agnes Yeung (1.8.91) |
| - Technology: | Mr Richard Li (1.8.91) |

The first meeting of the College Board was held on 23.10.91 and a mission statement approved (Appendix 1).

**Comment**

In an international as well as the Hong Kong context, there is no doubt that the College concept was radical and imaginative; there is considerable unfulfilled potential for future development. The 'window of opportunity' did mean, however, that various important planning considerations were not sufficiently dealt with thus making the first year of operation particularly difficult.

## 1.2 Scope of the College

The College is the organisational structure established to manage the HD/D courses transferred from the departments, the one exception being HD Legal Studies (PT) which was left with the Law Department because of its particular professional focus. For each HD/D course, therefore, there was a corresponding degree programme and the College's divisions correspond to the Faculties. The scope of the College is indicated in the following list of divisions and courses.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Division of Commerce | | |
| | Higher Diploma in | Accountancy<br>Business Studies |
| Division of Humanities & Social Sciences | | |
| | Higher Diploma in | Applied Chinese Studies<br>English for Professional Communication<br>Public and Social Administration<br>Translation & Interpretation |
| | Diploma in | Social Work |
| Division of Technology | | |
| | Higher Diploma in | Architectural Studies<br>Building<br>Building Services Engineering<br>Building Surveying<br>Computer Studies |

The original student number targets[6] for these courses have been changed and new academic development proposals for the period 1992-93 to 1994-95 were approved by Academic Board (22.5.91) in response to advice from UPGC.

Appendix 2 sets out details for each of the College courses. As part of the review leading to the new proposals, the Academic Board approved the College's recommendation that the PT mode of the HD Applied Chinese Studies be discontinued on the basis that of insufficient demand.

In overall terms, the UPGC guidelines indicate a target of 35% of FTEs for HD/D courses by 1994-95. The revised plan increased the FTE targets (approved plan) to achieve this target as follows:

| HD/D Courses[1] | **1992/93** | **1993/94** | **1994/95** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| UPGC Target | 4,413 | 4,299 | 4,089 | |
| Approved Plan | 3,764 | 3,745 | 3,791 | |
| **Revised Plan** | 3,927 | 3,957 | 4,085 | (36.0%) |
| Undergrad Degree | 5,405 | 5,832 | 6,327 | (55.7%) |
| Taught Postgrad | 563 | 656 | 707 | (6.2%) |
| Research Degree | 123 | 184 | 234 | (2.1%) |
| CPHK Total | 10,018 | 10,629 | 11,353 | ]3 % over- |
| UPGC Total | 9,665 | 10,372 | 11,039 | ]enrolment |

[1] HD/D courses also include courses being phased out from departments and not transferred to the College; also HD Legal Studies which is the responsibility of the Law Department.

## Comment

A great deal has been achieved as a firm foundation for the future development of HD/D courses in the context of City Polytechnic's growth to full size in 1996. In January 1991, the 1994-95 target for the College was 2907 FT and 2117 PT students (3700 FTEs); by May 1992 the target had been revised to 3253 FT and 1977 PT students (3994 FTEs) for an overall proportion of 36%/64% non-degree/degree places (see 1.2 below for details). This proportion includes an additional 243 PT students (91 FTEs) for the HD Legal Studies.

The scope of the College is likely to remain unchanged during the triennium. Preliminary consideration is being given to introducing a new HD in Banking and Finance Services but within the numbers targeted for the Commerce Division. The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences is now large enough to form two divisions.

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[6] Academic Development Proposals, 1991-92 to 1994-95, Feb 1991.

## 1.3 Management of the College

For the first two years at least, it was planned that the College would be managed by a Principal, Vice Principal, three Heads of Division and a College Secretary. This group meets weekly in the form of the Principal's Advisory Committee.

For personal reasons, the Vice Principal took a year's leave of absence (as from 1.10.91). After exploring various options, arrangements were made for the position of Assistant to the Principal. Mr Dominic Chan commenced duty on 1.1.92 on secondment for one year from the Academic Secretary's Office, as Assistant to the Principal.

The College Board is responsible for the academic standards of the HD/D courses and the Board's committees are detailed in Appendix 3 together with other committees required by the Polytechnic and working groups established to assist with managing the development of the College.

### Comment

Relative to the Faculties/Departments, the unit of management resource for the College/Divisions is much less. This is also the case for administrative staff - see 2.5. As at 29.11.91, the Faculties had a management strength of 29 (including Deans, Heads, Associate Heads) and the corresponding figure for the College was 4. On average, the management resource in the College was less than that in the Faculties by a factor of 1.8 based on academic staff numbers (or 2.9 based on student numbers).

Particular management difficulties were created by:

(a) the departure (1.10.91) of the Vice Principal, who had planned much of the College's establishment and early development, also the late appointment date of the Head of the Commerce Division;

(b) the transitional problems of being required to purchase the services of teaching staff in the departments from which HD/D courses had been transferred, to offset budget imbalances; this problem will continue into 1992-93;

(c) the change of policy in regard to full-time staff being responsible for at least 50% of PTE teaching;

(d) the need to set up all committee structures as required by the Polytechnic, together with administration arrangements - no administrative support was in place for heads in the form of PS, AA and CO staff;

(e) the absence of setting-up grants for office equipment and no transfer of the resources previously associated with HD/D courses;

(f) the continuing requirement, for 1992-93, to accept staff on transfer and secondment from departments;

(g) dispersal of staff due to the transitional accommodation arrangements.

In general, insufficient detailed attention seemed to have been given to the planning and implementation of major aspects of College establishment and development.

## 1.4 Budget

For 1991-92, there were two principal budgets for the College. The first was the academic budget which was approved on the basis of an estimated establishment of staffing for the College together with an estimation of the funding transfer required to utilise teaching from staff in departments. These staff had previously been involved in HD/D teaching but had not transferred with the courses, to the College. Major budget adjustments took place during the year due to:

(a) change of policy regarding the teaching of part-time evening students;

(b) adjustments to the rate for transfer of funds for teaching provided by departmental staff.

The second budget was for teaching equipment and an interim allocation was approved (9.10.91). The budget was finalised the following month with delegation to the AD(Resources) for approval of the costs of the College Terminal Room (see 1.5 below). This was approved as part of an additional allocation for teaching equipment advised (9.4.92) by the Finance Office.

During 1991-92, a new methodology for resourcing academic units was approved for academic budget allocation. The methodology is based on student (contact) hours and uses two types of weighting factor:

(a) a factor which reflects differences in discipline and applies to Faculties and the College;

(b) a weighting factor of 0.6 applied to the College only.

The College weighting factor has two components:

(1) ratio of staff contact hours/week (College/Faculties) 10/13.5 = 0.74

(2) ratio of mean salaries (College/Faculties) reflecting the different scales and staffing structure = 0.81

College Weighting = 0.74 x 0.81 = 0.6

**Comment**

During 1990-91, the budget arrangements and changes made budget management extremely difficult. This was further compounded by the relative inexperience of the College and the lack of timely expenditure information. An improved financial information system will be available for 1992-93.

Some of the assumptions for the College weighting factor do not appear to be appropriate and the methodology will be kept under review. In approximate terms the College receives one-fifth of the academic budget to provide courses for one-third of the Polytechnic's students, at half the cost per FTEs of that of the Faculties. This outcome seems to be due mainly to the 0.6 factor being applied to the whole budget rather than to the staffing component; also to the high SSR (>16:1) of the College.

### 1.5 Accommodation

The Report to the UPGC (January 1991) stated:

> "25. The College will be accommodated within the space currently available in Phase 1 of the Polytechnic. It will not be possible to identify the College as a separate organisational unit within Phase 1 and staff will be accommodated within the existing Faculty areas in the interim period."

The Accommodation Committee made recommendations for College accommodation, which were approved (17.7.91) and the Deans advised (30.7.91) by the Associate Director (Resources). Most departments co-operated, others did not; by November most of the allocated accommodation had been released to the College.

During Term 1, a College Terminal Room had been approved for Terms 2 and 3 with partitioning completed by the end of December. Also during Term 1, by the end of October, partitioning had been completed to establish a College Office to meet the needs of the Divisions and the College.

In terms of specialist facilities such as computer laboratories, design studios and language laboratories, the only facility allocated to the College in 1991-92 was a College Terminal Room. The Accommodation Committee was asked to approve allocation of additional specialist facilities for 1992-93.

#### Comment

While it is evident that accommodation allocations were planned and approved, experience showed that the planning was not implemented effectively with consequent considerable disadvantage to:

(a) new academic and administrative staff who had to work during Term 1 from unsatisfactory temporary accommodation without basic facilities;

(b) staff and students requiring use of the College Terminal Room which was not completely available until the end of Term 2;

(c) part-time staff, including fieldwork supervisors.

In general, morale and efficiency were affected by the delayed availability of accommodation compounded, to some extent, by accommodation requirements which had not been anticipated.

## 2. FUNCTIONS OF THE COLLEGE

### 2.1 Students

The projected new intakes for the 1992-95 triennium are shown in Appendix 2. The general entrance requirements for full-time HD/D courses are based on passes at grade E or above in the Hong Kong Certificate in Education Examination (HKCEE). A Chinese Language requirement for all courses has been introduced, starting in 1993-94, in response to a proposal from student representatives.

Entry characteristics of students are being monitored with reference to qualifications, age, gender and school of origin (for marketing purposes). Commissioned reports have been prepared by the Academic Planning Unit. As with degree student entry, the Grade Point Average (GPA) on entry has dropped over the period 1988 to 1991 - see Appendix 4. A significant proportion of students have HKAL passes (36% in 1990; 32% in 1991); this is likely to continue to decrease due to a general increase in number of first year, first degree places in Hong Kong; also to HD/D recruitment being targeted at Form 5 leavers (HKCEE only).

Given that the average age of the student completing Form 5 is 17, it is surprising to note that the average age at entry for full-time and part-time HD/D students is 20.5 (1991) and 24.7 (1991) respectively. The former has been steady since 1988 with the latter showing a decrease from 25.1 (1988).

Correspondingly, for part-time HD/D students on entry, it is of interest to note the average length of relevant employment in months: 54.2 (1988), 43.5 (1989), 40.9 (1990) - discipline variations are shown below:

Table 4.2c[7]

Average Length of Relevant Employment in Months - Non-Degree Courses

| Discipline | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Business & Commerce | 49.5 | 36.4 | 44.0 |
| Humanities & Social Sciences | 71.1 | 68.8 | 73.2 |
| Science & Technology | 47.2 | 32.2 | 22.6 |
| Total | 54.2 | 43.5 | 40.9 |

The language of instruction and examination for HD courses is English except for Applied Chinese Studies and the Diploma in Social Work. As noted in the Report on Performance Indicators (MIO, May 1991), the performance in English B for full-time HD students has been decreasing over the period 1988-1990 in terms of the proportion of students having 'C' or above - less than 25% in Humanities & Social Sciences and in Commerce.

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[7] Report on Performance Indicators, Management Information Office, May 1991.

A Language Institute has been established by the Polytechnic to enhance general language proficiency and communication skills of students in English and Chinese. Reports for HD/D students have not yet been received.

**Comment**

It should be noted that only 80% of the total number of candidates sitting HKCEE English Language (Syllabus B), obtain a grade of C or above. A recent report[8] notes that the absence of basic English communication skills is "particularly evident among the 50,000 Form 5 school leavers who enter the workforce each year".

In general, the need to use teaching services from staff in departments created difficulties in coordinating teaching effort. This may have reduced the effectiveness of teaching and assessment.

## 2.2 Graduates

> "The throughput of students of a tertiary institution is its life-blood and monitoring the performance of courses in this area is seen as a necessary activity currently undertaken by the Academic Planning Unit (APU)."[9]

Appendix 5 gives an example of the student flow diagram used as the reporting procedure - in this case for the full-time mode of the HD Business Studies, for which the attrition rate is 9%.

For planning purposes, attrition rates are estimated and the table shows the attrition rates used for Academic Development Plan for 1992-95. It should be noted that the first students entering courses managed by the College will not graduate until 1994.

Academic Development Plan (1992-95) - Attrition Rates (Estimated)

| | FT | PT |
|---|---|---|
| CM Division | | |
| Yr 1-2 | 9% | 38% |
| Yr 2-3 | 5% | 8% |
| Yr 3-4 | | 5% |
| HS Division | | |
| Yr 1-2 | 12% | 24% |
| Yr 2-3 | 4% | 11% |
| Yr 3-4 | | 5% |
| TC Division | | |
| Yr 1-2 | 14% | 27% |
| Yr 2-3 | 2% | 10% |
| Yr 3-4 | | 4% |

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[8] HongkongBank Language Development Fund Project No. 2 (1991)

[9] BALLA, J R "Student Flow:Students graduating from programmes offered by the College of Higher Vocational Studies" CPHK: Academic Planning Unit, April 1992.

Appendix 6 provides a summary of the employment and higher education choices of 1991 higher diploma and diploma graduates[10].

## 2.3 Courses

The College's courses and projected intakes are shown in Appendix 2. In 1991-92 a term structure was used for all Polytechnic courses. During the triennium 1992-95 all of the HD/D courses will be restructured on the basis of:

(a) an academic year of two equal semesters (15 weeks) and a summer term (10 weeks);

(b) a more flexible module definition of 2-12 semester hours.

The schedule shown in Appendix 7 indicates courses which will be revalidated; this represents a unique opportunity for curriculum development. To assist with such development and consistent with its mission to ensure that courses are vocationally relevant, the College sought and gained Council approval to establish Course Advisory Committees - details in Appendix 8.

There is little doubt that the College's HD/D courses can be improved to meet the needs of students and employers. For each course there is a course committee (Appendix 3) charged with quality maintenance and these committees are required to present annual reports to the College Board and then to the Academic Board. Important areas for particular development are:

(a) the concept of a curriculum as a basis for teaching as the initiation and management of learning;

(b) improved assessment procedures to enhance learning and provide feedback for improved performance;

(c) transferable skills such as communication skills, learning skills and information management skills;

(d) evaluation for curriculum improvement including content, level, coursework and examination.

To assist with such development the College has established a Course Monitoring Committee and two working groups - one on the standard of the Higher Diploma and one on quality teaching - see Appendix 3.

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[10] "Graduate Employment Survey 1991", Student Affairs Office.

**Comment**

The need to use teaching services from departments delayed course revalidation in at least one Division and generally caused problems for the staff effort required for course restructuring.

## 2.4 Academic Staff

As noted previously, the College was formally established on 1 January 1991. With the transfer of responsibility of HD/D courses from departments to the College's new Divisions, staff were invited to apply for transfer to the College, either at their current level of appointment or on promotion -the latter providing an early opportunity for such advancement.

As at 1 May 1992, a total of 96 academic staff appointments had been made of which 46 were by transfer. The outcome is a potentially strong blend of transferred experience and external experience. Future growth is likely to be based mainly on external appointments - quality considerations are indicated by the qualifications held by staff with approximately two-thirds holding postgraduate degrees.

For the next academic year, academic staff numbers are likely to increase by about 66%. This increase is one of a number of crucial factors for management of the College's development.

**Conditions of Service**

The conditions of service of College staff differ in two major respects from staff in the Faculties - the principal conditions are summarised:

**Summary of Policy Comparisons : College/Faculties**

| Academic staff | College | Faculties |
|---|---|---|
| All students (FTE target) | 35% | 65% |
| Staff contact (hrs/wk) | 13.5 | 10 |
| SSR | 16:1 | 11.5:1 |
| Research mandatory | No | Yes |
| Budget year (52 weeks) | | |
| Student weeks (FT) | 30 | 30 |
| Other weeks (incl. summer term) | 14 | 14 |
| Leave weeks (1) | 8 | 8 |

(1) Assuming that general holidays are incidental to the other weeks.

One difference is that of salary scales. At 1 January 1991, all academic staff were paid on the Polytechnic scale and staff who accepted transfer appointments at the same grade retained this scale on a personal basis. Staff who transferred with promotion moved to the new College scales which were approved by Council (19 November 1990) for recommendation to the UPGC and to the Secretary for Education and Manpower.

This change was based on the consideration that, with expansion of higher education and the establishment of two new technical colleges, the polytechnics would no longer be the sole providers of HD courses. There was therefore need for co-ordination and parity. The grades in the colleges are aligned with those in the polytechnics but the scales stop two points below the existing maxima.

During 1992-93, university salary scales will be introduced for Faculty staff eligible for transfer. For some years, therefore, there will be three salary scales for Polytechnic staff.

As noted in the general job specification for teaching staff (Appendix 9) the College is committed to excellence in teaching. Teachers of the College are expected to maintain high standards of scholarship with the emphasis on teaching as one of the 'overlapping functions of discovery, integration, application and teaching'[11]. As such, teaching should be regarded as the initiation and management of learning; vocational research will be appropriate.

Members of the UPGC (letter to Director, 11.2.91) noted ..... that it is intended that staff recruited specifically to teach non-degree courses will enjoy the same privileges as other staff in relation to staff development, membership of boards and committees and access to facilities, including the opportunity to undertake research. In this regard, provision for access to funding has been approved by the Academic Board (10.12.91).

### Part-time Teaching

As with Faculty staff, College academic staff are expected to teach for at least one evening per week so that at least 50% of evening teaching can be undertaken by full-time staff. Any additional teaching is undertaken by part-time staff who are not Polytechnic employees and who are paid on an hourly basis.

### Comment

Although teaching to part-time students is based on the same module documents, much more needs to be done to ensure an appropriate standard of educational experience for part-time students. During 1991-92 there has been no provision for staff training and development for PT staff although there are orientation meetings and liaison arrangements. Attention needs to be given to:

(a) systematic opportunities for PT staff training and development - a pilot programme will be prepared by the Professional Development Unit of ETC;

(b) monitoring and evaluating PT teaching and assessment.

For full-time staff, generally, more needs to be done to promote awareness of the need for the same professionalism for teaching as for discipline capability. This will require appropriate provision of staff development opportunities together with recognition and reward for excellence in teaching.

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[11] BOYER, E Scholarship Reconsidered : Priorities of the Professoriate, Carnegie Foundation, 1991

Developments are also needed for systematic appraisal for staff development and for improved criteria and requirements for re-appointment and substantiation.

The need to use teaching services from departments made it difficult to monitor and maintain the quality of the teaching effort.

### 2.5 Administrative Staff

Administration is a crucial function of the College but has been one of the most under-resourced areas during 1991-92. Adequate arrangements were not in place at the beginning of the financial year; an interim establishment of 21 was approved (1.9.91) - to be arranged by transfer (voluntary) wherever possible.

Throughout the year the College has not reached its full complement of administrative staff particularly in the important area of administrative assistants (AAs) with only 2 (out of 4) in position at 1.10.92. This has resulted in workload and efficiency problems for both administrative staff and academic staff.

For the first year of College development new administrative procedures had to be established with relatively inexperienced staff, to cope with the vital functions of admission of students, appointment of FT and PT staff, module organisation and assessment administration. A College Office was established under the supervision of the College Secretary and a great deal was achieved under adverse conditions of accommodation and equipment availability. A particularly vexed question was that of the variability of administrative servicing provided by departments providing budget transfer teaching.

On average, on the basis of student numbers (FTE), the Faculties had twice (2.16) the College number of senior administrative staff and nearly four times (3.95) the number of subordinate staff.

**Comment**

Some highly significant changes will be made for 1992-93:

(a) The new internal budget methodology will enable the College to appoint the administrative staff it needs as it prepares to provide quality education for up to 36% of the Polytechnic's students by the end of the triennium.

(b) Each Division will have a Divisional Office which will be the responsibility of the HoD - a development of the divisional team approach currently used in the College Office.

(c) The College Secretary will be in charge of the College Office (and staffing) only. The College Secretary has agreed to changing secondment from the Academic Secretary's Office to a transfer to the College thus providing a strong basis for future development.

## 2.6 Quality

Much of the planning of the College (and the College) is based on numbers which describe the main functions of providing higher vocational studies for PT and FT students. An overriding function of the College is to ensure (and be accountable for) the quality of its two principal 'products' - graduates and courses. Quality assurance is therefore required, i.e. 'all those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements for quality' [12].

These 'given requirements' need the development of performance indicators (PIs - quantitative) and quality indicators (QIs). Appendix 10 sets out various considerations including a definition of teaching, conditions for quality and questions for quality assurance.

### Comment

For the College, a quality agenda is being developed based on the Mission Statement(which incorporates quality definitions) that includes:

(a) Committees and Working Groups - see Appendix 3

(b) Staff development provision based on staff development plans developed by each Division (for all staff) consistent with the mission of the College.

(c) Evaluation procedures to improve the performance of academic staff in managing the learning of students - including coursework and examination.

(d) Policy and procedures for student skills development - particularly communication skills; also a student guide.

(e) Development of PIs and QIs within the context of the Polytechnic.

## 2.7 Marketing

This function of the College is being developed to ensure that the College enrols the best possible students for its courses which are designed for HKCEE-level entry. In recent years there has been a downward trend in the entry proportion with HKALE qualifications (see 2.1) and this will be monitored together with other entry characteristics. Government policy is a crucial consideration with reference to the number of first year, first degree (FYFD) places, entry into sixth form, the proportion of degree places in the polytechnics and the enrolment targets for the (new) technical colleges, technical institutes and colleges of education.

The College's marketing strategy for its higher diploma/diploma courses is comprehensive and has some significant innovations:

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[12] Quality Vocabulary BS 4778 : Part 1 1987

(a) clear definition of the target audience;
(b) high quality print information - see Appendix 11;
(c) College and Student videos;
(d) Electronic Prospectus;
(e) Meetings for Careers Masters;
(f) School Visit Programme (being developed - pilot completed);
(g) liaison with schools (being developed) and technical institutes;
(h) a Student Guide (being developed); -
(i) PR arrangements (being developed).

**Comment**

The UPGC has recently (May 1992) revised the FYFD places for the Polytechnic (and other higher education institutions) and indicated a target of 63/37% for degree/non-degree places.

The Academic Secretary and his staff have been active in promoting a Hong Kong-wide admissions scheme for all HKCEE-level entry courses, which is likely to be operational for 1993-94, the year in which the two new technical colleges admit their first students. This will be of considerable benefit to the College.

City Polytechnic will be in a particularly strong position for quality entry and successful marketing because:

(a) the College will have the widest range of well-established HD/D courses in Hong Kong;

(b) HD/D students will have access to all of the excellent facilities available to degree students;

(c) all courses will be restructured for 1993-94;

(d) Phase 2 expansion will have been completed;

(e) HD/D graduates will have excellent job opportunities and opportunities for higher qualifications;

## 3. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

For the triennium 1992-93 to 1994-95, the College is planning for further change, consolidation and improvement. Change will continue during 1992-93 with restructuring and revalidation of courses, with new staff appointments and with a comprehensive move to new accommodation in the Polytechnic.

Plans are being developed in the Division of Commerce to introduce new programmes within the target numbers for the Division's existing courses. The Division of Humanities and Social Sciences is now large enough to form two divisions. The Division of Technology will be involved in revalidation of courses and will continue to cope with the requirement to use teaching and other facilities provided by the Department of Building and Construction, at least during 1992-93.

Consolidation will take place with newly restructured courses, accommodation arrangements, management systems and, of course, with the integration of new and existing staff. In this regard team building and staff development will be given a high priority.

Other aims will be to improve quality with regard to teaching, learning and assessment. Another continuing aim will be to improve the quality of students enrolling and hence the quality of HD/D graduates entering the workforce of Hong Kong.

*This paper was prepared as an individual submission (15 June 1994). The attached papers (cf 2.1 and 2.2) can be found elsewhere in this publication.*

## SUBMISSION TO THE
## UNIVERSITY AND POLYTECHNIC GRANTS COMMITTEE OF HONG KONG

### "Higher Education 1991-2001" UPGC Interim Report, November 1993

### Summary

The UPGC Interim Report is referred to as the Report and references are made to Annexes and paragraphs. The main recommendations of this submission are:

* The Report should address issues relating to the sub-degree level of higher education (HE).

* Hong Kong should have an integrated HE system. Accordingly, an appropriate body should be established with an overview responsibility for policy and coordination of the provision of sub-degree education at the Higher Diploma (HD) level.

* Policies regarding the relationship of funding to assessment of research, and of teaching and learning quality, should be included in the Report.

* For all of HE in Hong Kong, a credit unit and transfer system should be developed as soon as possible, with due regard for integration with developments in China and internationally, including consultation with professional bodies.

* For policies relating to participation rates and targets for higher education, reference should be made to rates and targets for sub-degree places.

### Introduction

1. With the agreement of the Governor-in-Council, UPGC published the Report and its draft mission statement on 4 March 1994, for public consultation. City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK) has prepared a submission after extensive consultation, on "Higher Education 1991-2001" and on the draft UPGC mission statement.

2. This paper is an individual submission noting that there is very little reference to the sub-degree level of higher education and no discussion about its contribution to higher education in the future. Indeed, it would seem that the Report has been written with the assumption that higher education equates only with degree education. For background two papers are attached:

    2.1 Standing and Standard of the Higher Diploma

    2.2 The Higher Diploma in Hong Kong

**Recommendation**: The paper should address issues relating to the sub-degree level of higher education (HE).

**Context**

3. The context for the Report is provided by the annexes and by the principal conclusion of the Report: "Hong Kong will need world-class higher education institutions." (paras 26, 45) 'Excellence' is a judgement related to quality as a criterion; a 'world-class' judgement implies benchmarking and would include judgements of the quality of courses, graduates, staff, and facilities, for example.

4. Annex D sets out the student number (FTE) projected profiles for the 1995-98 triennium, for the UPGC institutions. During this triennium, the sub-degree proportion for CPHK is about 36%; for Hong Kong overall, the sub-degree proportion is projected as 15.1%. The assumption of "steady state" for sub-degree programmes will be discussed later noting that sub-degree programmes are also be available from non-UPGC institutions such as the Hong Kong Technical Colleges and the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong. There are other, private, providers of sub-degree higher education in Hong Kong.

**Recommendation**: Hong Kong should have an integrated HE system. Accordingly, an appropriate body should be established with an overview responsibility for policy and coordination of the provision of sub-degree education at the Higher Diploma (HD) level.

5. Annex C (October 1992) sets out the "illustrative" role for CPHK in the foreseeable future (para 13). This annex also provides a context for the future with a statement of intention:

> "The UPGC intends to place particular emphasis on effective procedures for monitoring teaching quality and cost-effectiveness." (para 6)

UPGC's consultation paper (19 March 1994) on assessing teaching and education quality, and the subsequent letter (31 May 1994) on teaching and learning quality, will have far-reaching effects on the development of higher education up to the end of the century and belong. The intention to relate funding to such assessments will shape development according to the assessment criteria, standards and procedures. In regard to 'teaching and learning' the emphasis should be on the quality of courses and graduates as 'products' - akin to published papers being the products of research.

**Recommendation**: Policies regarding the relationship of funding to assessment of research, and of teaching and learning quality, should be included in the Report.

**Issues**

6. Annex A refers to the Government's decisions on the recommendations of the Education Commission's Report No. 3 (ECR 3) and the Report discusses most of these decisions. In particular (para 8) it notes that the Government's request for the institutions to consider extending teaching time has met with only a modest response; also the introduction of a credit unit system is regarded as having a lower priority than other changes. In regard to

the former, it would be possible to extend teaching time by developing the summer term (10 weeks) into a third "semester" (14 weeks) with a view to developing the potential of a triple tracking model which would provide up to three intakes, in any one year, with the academic year still comprising two semesters. This model is being developed in the USA and UK. For the latter consideration, it should be noted that Chinese University and the OLI have introduced a credit unit systems. This development would provide considerable advantage for local, national and international flexibility.

**Recommendation**: For all of HE in Hong Kong, a credit unit and transfer system should be developed as soon as possible, with due regard for integration with developments in China and internationally, including consultation with professional bodies.

7. In discussing expansion (1991-95), the Report measures expansion of tertiary education by the growth in the participation rate defined as the number of first year, first degree (FYFD) places available, compared with the size of the relevant age group (17-20), with a target of 18% by 1994-95 (paras 10, 11). This is indicative of the clear assumption throughout the report that tertiary (or higher) education is synonymous with degree education. No corresponding targets have been set for first year, sub-degree places but a related estimate for sub-degree places would be a participation rate of the order of 7%.

**Recommendation**: For policies relating to participation rates and targets for higher education, reference should be made to rates and targets for sub-degree places.

8. In para 22, the Report notes that elsewhere in the world there has been an upsurge in the demand for continuing professional education (CPE); but there has also been recognition of the need for more higher diploma-level qualified people. For CPE, it may be appropriate to consider the potential for developing models for computer-based open learning and distance learning. In this regard, for example, development part-time advanced diploma programmes would be appropriate.

9. It is not until page 12 of the Report (para 33) that we find a reference to "non-degree" but only in the form of a quote from a recent study published by the Business and Professionals Federation (BPF). BPF suggests that tertiary institutions should "be required to offer more non-degree, and graduate and executive programmes in conjunction with overseas and mainland universities".

10. The Committee might wish to support this suggestion which is entirely consistent with the current stage of development of the College in terms of our range of programmes and our policy to work with universities elsewhere. Despite the BPF suggestion, the report notes (para 37) that sub-degree numbers will remain almost static during the triennium 1995-98. Elsewhere (para 32) the Report has referred to the Education and Manpower Branch report "Manpower Outlook in the 1990's" with reference only to degree level projections of supply and requirements. While it is certainly the case that, for sub-degree, the shortfall of 5,600 in 1996 changes to a surplus of 5,700 in 2001, this report notes that a major revision of the 1996 projection had been required because "many sub-degree graduates are found to seek upgrading of their qualifications to degree level by pursuing conversion study both locally and overseas". This trend is continuing upwards, with the 1992-93 CPHK

survey showing that 19.4% of higher diploma graduates are proceeding to further study at degree level and beyond. It is reasonable to believe that the 2001 projection will require substantial revision resulting in a projected shortfall. There is also reason to believe that more higher diploma level graduates will be required, than estimated, to sustain the economic and social development of Hong Kong as part of China.

11. As noted previously, the principal conclusion of this interim, consultative report is that Hong Kong will need world-class higher education institutions. There is no doubt that the future City University of Hong Kong has world-class facilities. The overall aim, therefore, is to match the quality of staff, programmes and students with the facilities. In this regard it is important to discuss, and comment on, the three "possible scenarios" (para 25) identified by the report and, in particular, to consider the implications of the option favoured by the UPGC:

> (iii) "The institutions should incorporate centres of excellence having local, regional and international functions. They should provide very high quality bilingual manpower for both Hong Kong and the hinterland and should act as points of reference, particularly in business and social studies and in innovative science and technology for developments in Southern China and more widely. Some undergraduate students and many postgraduate students would be recruited from outside Hong Kong."

12. The College is well placed to develop as a centre of excellence for higher vocational education in the areas indicated and in other areas such as language studies which will be crucial for the bilingual implications of the above scenario. Other implications relate to the new opportunities to teach students on a cost recovery basis, a particular implication being that of providing staff and student accommodation for institutional growth. For any scenario, the related missions of UPGC and the future City University of Hong Kong will, presumably, continue to give the highest priority to the education of the young men and women who will be sustaining the continuing economic and social development of Hong Kong well into the next century.

*In an Information Paper (28.5.94) the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) had suggested a policy of Teaching and Learning Quality Assessment which would affect funding in the higher education institutions. As a result of feedback, the UPGC proposed a policy of process audit which would not affect funding, while reserving its position on quality assessment. This letter was written to convey views on both quality process audit and on quality assessment - see attachment.*

16 September 1994

Professor Inga-Stima Ewbank
Professor of English
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT
England

Dear Professor Ewbank,

**TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY PROCESS AUDITS (TLQPA)**
**UPGC Seminar, 5 September 1994**

The Seminar was an interesting and worthwhile exercise albeit ambitious with regard to the scope of the aims and topics, and the number of participants. This is a response to indicate willingness to respond to the UPGC's consultation initiatives. But, at the outset, let me say that your Chair performance was much appreciated.

I will structure this response by commenting briefly on the Seminar topics (as I noted them) and by attaching a more detailed set of comments on the UPGC Information Paper 'Assessment of Teaching and Learning Quality' (28.5.94).

By way of introduction the UPGC Chairman, Mr Antony Leung, JP, emphasized the UPGC's interest in quality of teaching. He indicated that UPGC is seeking advice on how to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and how to relate such evaluation to funding. (It seemed that he also suggested that TLQ might not be taken seriously if not linked to funding?)

*Comment:* At the seminar, I advocated 'incentive funding' for such purposes including the Teaching Development Grant earmarked for 1994-95. This would be additional or bonus funding based on the Tennessee model (also adapted by the Australian Government).

As noted in the attachment, I believe that the quality assessment focus should be on products (as for research) rather than on 'T&L'; the products being the course, course experience of students, and course satisfaction (feedback from graduates in first employment and their employers).

You then invited the seminar participants to comment on the following questions:

(a) How can institutions keep ownership of quality procedures?

*Comment* Through representative partnership with the UPGC and the collective sharing of related experience, ie a designated group or committee. (A desirable outcome would be that all HEIs would receive the full incentive or bonus funding for meeting quality expectations.)

(b) What, if any, are the issues which are peculiar to higher education in Hong Kong?

*Comment* If necessary, these can be addressed in depth by the above group. It should be noted, however, that higher education in Hong Kong comprises degree and higher vocational education - the latter currently under three separate jurisdictions. SAR status will likely provide impetus for consideration of four year honours degrees and review of the constitution of the UPGC.

(c) To what extent and in what way should we use quantitative performance indicators?

*Comment* Quantitative PIs are, in effect, statistical indicators which are useful for trends and, as appropriate, threshold considerations. Quality Indicators (QIs) need to be developed - possibly in terms of 'satisfaction' as a proxy for quality. The attachment refers to QIs.

(d) What should be the focus of quality review: teaching/learning; staff/student?

*Comment* This is discussed in the first *Comment* above. What is often neglected is the crucial role of assessment of student performance in shaping student learning and experience; also in determining the outcomes of higher education. It is the interface of teaching/learning and also affects staff/student interaction Formative assessment is vitally important and there are many aspects of summative assessment which need considerable improvement. You may wish to refer to Times Higher (pp12&13, 26 August 1994) for relevant articles on grading.

(e) What are the implications of peer review?

*Comment* For audit (fitness for purpose/context), reviewers must be trained and monitored so that diversity is recognised and valued, particularly for different missions of teaching and courses. Review procedures (including sampling) need to be systematic and 'transparent'. There should be a theoretical framework.

(f) What are the implications of seeking "continuous improvement" in higher education?

*Comment* Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) has significance only if appropriate indicators and expectations are monitored systematically - for each HEI and for the system as a whole. Benchmarking is also important for CQI. Of most significance, however, is the student's total education experience; hence the importance of developing a Student Charter (HEI/HK). The incoming students represent the 'constant variable' each year and CQI is as much about caring for their needs and expectations as it about managing - clearly the two should overlap!

(g) There will be expectations of the outcomes of TLQ process audits, ie the outcomes might be "better or worse than expectations".

*Comment* It is vitally important that the expectations are shared and agreed by the relevant stakeholders be they staff, students, graduates, employers, government etc. Meeting expectations would be linked to incentive funding.

(h) What are the implications of a "close relationship" between research and teaching?

*Comment* The assumption needs to be considered carefully. For example, at the recent International Conference on Improving University Teaching in Hong Kong, the USA keynote referred to research which indicated a correlation of 0.1 between research and teaching. I suggest that it is more appropriate to consider scholarship as proposed by Ernest Boyer, for the priorities for the professoriate. As such, scholarship (teaching, application, integration, discovery) provides for both quality and diversity.

What is certainly evident is the need for clear definitions of all of the terms used to ensure common understanding: teaching, learning, quality audit, quality assessment and so on.

I do hope that these comments are both clear and helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Brad Imrie

B W Imrie
Principal
College of Higher Vocational Studies

*Paper (25 July 1994) was sent as an attachment to the letter (16 September 1994) to Professor Ewbank, Chair of the UPGC Working Group on Teaching Quality.*

## ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY (TLQA)

### UPGC Information Paper (28.5.94)
### (Ref: UPGC/GEN/242/92)

1 This is a personal comment in the form of notes on the UPGC Information Paper which will be referred to as TLQA. The notes start with some general comments and are referenced by paragraph number to TLQA. TLQ assessment is intended, however, to be carried out by a TLQ Process Audit (TLQPA).

2 For purposes such as TLQPA, it is particularly important to clarify and agree definitions at the outset, for coherence and for effective communication. The following definitions provide the conceptual context for these notes.

teaching - 'the initiation and management of learning' (Warnock, 1989). This implies assessment (refer below) but assessment is so important that it should be dealt with explicitly. Assessment of learning quality means, in practice, assessment of student performance.

education - A recent report 'Learning Outcomes in Higher Education' (Otter, 1992) noted the premise that 'learning is the central purpose of higher education'. A conclusion, also important for this discussion, is that 'the notion of what a degree represents has never been very clear' and therefore a definition is needed since the degree is the benchmark for higher education. It would then be appropriate to develop a complementary set of essential graduate competencies or capabilities. As noted recently by the Australian Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, a necessary performance level for higher education is that

> "graduates should be enabled to operate anywhere in any sphere at a level of 'professionalism' consistent with best international practice, and in ways that embody the highest ethical standards".

learning - 'The complete definition of learning emphasises the notion of a relatively permanent change in behaviour as a function of practice or experience.' (Davis et al, 1974)

outcomes - learning outcomes are therefore important and the report (Otter, 1992) confirmed 'the fundamental connection between the description and assessment of learning outcomes, and the importance of this in maintaining quality'.

assessment - 'Derivation and communication of information and judgements about student learning and performance, for the purpose of guiding learning and reporting on student progress and achievement in a course of study.'

quality - TLQA suggests 'added value' (para. 7) which would entail appropriate benchmarking. A recognised definition is 'fitness for purpose' which ensures that quality is properly related to context (eg mission).

Quality assessment is defined by Warren Piper (1993) as 'evaluation of the quality of a product or service; evaluation of the result of quality management or quality assurance ..'

3 'Quality' is a relatively recent consideration for higher education. For example, quality cannot be found in the Contents or in the Index of such books as Universities: The Management Challenge (Lockwood & Davies, 1985) and Managing Higher Education (Bland, 1990). In the UK, the first International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education was held in 1989. At that conference, a paper 'Quality as a Vector' (Imrie, 1989) noted that quality should be used to indicate direction for improvement on the basis of appropriate definitions. While also noting that 'quality exists, whether it is defined or not'(Pirsig, 1977), the following definition was used:

> 'Quality, in higher education, is evident capability of performance or function with reference to desired standards and criteria. Quality is a judgement of value.'

4 Pirsig considered that quality was the inverse side of caring; 'That is what caring really is, a feeling of identification with what one's doing.' (Pirsig p200) It is relevant to note that Barnett (1992) recommends Total Quality Care for improving higher education. He proposes that the quality assessment should focus on institutional performance in reviewing the quality of courses and programmes, and in improving the curriculum and character of the student experience. Similarly, a report from the Quality in Higher Education Project (QHE,1992) concluded that

> 'It is the total student experience of learning that underpins the assessment of quality in higher education.'

Total Student Experience was 'coined as an ironic corruption' of Total Quality Management, to imply that quality in higher education would come about as the result of continuous improvement of the learning experience of students (Update, 1993).

5 For TLQA, there is the risk of assessing that which is easily measured thus sending a strong signal which has the potential of being the wrong signal particularly if the assessment is related to funding. There would be considerable advantage in moving the focus from quality of 'teaching' to quality of the 'course/course experience'. The course and the graduate are identifiable products of higher education - the former provides context for the education/learning experience, the latter is the intended outcome of higher education as an enterprise.

6 If 'teaching and learning' in the context of TLQA are intended to include all considerations of assessment (formative and summative, for learning and performance) then this should be made explicit for appropriate development and use of quantitative and qualitative (descriptive) indicators. Monitoring of trends could then incorporate the two-tier concepts of Herzberg's 'hygiene/satisfaction' model with the former setting out the (agreed) prerequisites for TLQ and 'satisfaction' providing a proxy for perceived quality.

Paragraph References

7 (para.1) A performance-based system is welcomed if all of the performance considerations are 'fit for the purpose' and clearly defined, eg what is a degree? What is a Higher Diploma? For performance, course quality and student experience should be paramount.

(para.2) T&L are indeed central to role and mission and should be defined - refer to previous discussion.

(para.3) TLQA will affect funding - this should take the form of incentive funding (refer Attachment 1) as noted by Warren Piper (1993). The TLQA principles are vitally important.

(a) 'Self-conscious' and 'serious' are interesting choices; in my view there should be a commitment to professionalism in TLQ comparable to discipline-related professionalism. TLQ research (and publications) should be encouraged and recognised.

(b) The emphasis on CQI (continuous quality improvement) is welcomed. Recently, Marchese (1994) identified context (noted in para.7) and commitment as crucial for assessment, quality, and undergraduate improvement. TQM or CQI provide answers to the context question but commitment is a 'people' question - for staff and for students. Learning, as an outcome, is a function of student preparedness, motivation, effort, time and wellbeing; in other words Total Student Experience. Marchese also notes the potential of the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award as a new process of self-study and institutional review. Interestingly Mok (1994), in her analysis of TQM and its implementation in Hong Kong, also emphasises the significance of the Malcolm Baldrige Quality process.

(c) Feedback is a key principle for quality (noted in para.9). One of the few recognised Quality Indicators (QIs) is systematic feedback from graduates on 'satisfaction' as a proxy for quality, and should be made explicit. As noted in Update, employers should not be involved only in providing feedback; the main purposes are also noted for using employer satisfaction information.

(d) For this principle to become part of practice a very considerable amount of professional development will be required in regard to staff knowledge, skills and attitudes.

(e) Such processes should, at all times, consider student experience and wellbeing. For example, students very seldom receive feedback on the student evaluations (and outcomes) which they provide. The end of course examination has a profound effect on student learning, experience, and award outcome; yet it is very seldom that students are asked to evaluate the final examination from their perspective, ie the total student experience.

(para.4) TLQPAs are intended to provide UPGC with information on 'processes', 'vigour' and 'efficacy' of processes. This will affect decisions on resource allocation. It is hoped that the assumptions, criteria, and the procedures will be transparent. It is not at all clear how this approach will relate to the quality of the course/course experience and the quality of the graduate. The vitally important contribution of non-academic staff should be recognised for all quality processes and outcomes.

(para.5) One of the unique features of tertiary education in Hong Kong, is the variation in style and management of the Higher Diploma.

(para.6) Reference is made to students and to the use of assessment to improve the quality of educational experience. In this regard I recommend that UPGC promote the initiation, by each institution, of staff/student discussion to develop a Student Charter and a Code of Ethics for staff.

(para.7) In this paragraph, the importance of definition is recognised. If 'added value' is used as indicated (for diploma or degree student), will it be practicable or even desirable to try to measure the input 'values' of a 'disadvantaged' student and a 'privileged' student? 'Necessary facilities and systems in place' is potentially a useful concept and corresponds to the 'hygiene' component of the model mentioned in 6.

(para.8) 'Essential factors' or benchmarks reflecting TLQ are also potentially useful. One essential benchmark would be the existence of institutional policy and guidelines for assessment of student learning and performance. Another factor, reflecting the pedagogical professionalism of academic staff, would be mandatory continuing professional education (CPE) programmes for all staff - to demonstrate commitment to CQI for student-centred teaching, learning and assessment. Such commitment would also address the fundamentally important issues related to student preparedness for tertiary education at the diploma or degree level.

(para.9) The clear identification of sources of qualitative information is welcomed. I would strongly recommend that 'graduates' be added explicitly- preferably in first employment after six months (say), in conjunction with feedback from the employer. These qualitative indicators (QIs) correspond to the 'satisfaction' component of the hygiene/satisfaction model mentioned previously.

(para.10) These quantitative variables correspond to the hygiene component. Other such indicators which are important and which should be made explicit are: SSR, contact hours (staff and students), and training of all staff (academic and non-academic) - for example there should be systematic management training for academic staff.

(para.11) This paragraph might imply that 'delivery of teaching and education' is defined as 'the imparting of knowledge'. Eraut (1989), for example, has described six types of knowledge - perhaps a TLQA definition is also required? In regard to 'ethos and culture', there is information in the literature. Attachment 1 comprises Appendices A and B from the paper by Imrie (1989); Appendix A deals mainly with quantitative indicators while Appendix B sets out first and second dimension quality indicators. The 'second dimension' includes such considerations as coherence : synergism; vitality : enthusiasm; diversity : community; and self-reflection : self-assessment.

(para.12) Accountability and continuous review and improvement of quality are strongly welcomed - for formative and incentive purposes but not for sanctions. TLQA is welcomed because it has the potential to establish the professionalism of teaching in higher education as equivalent to the discipline professionalism which is the basis for academic appointments and for the RAE. QIs (Quality Indicators) are required which relate to the Total Student Experience, ie the extent to which the institution cares for:

* student preparedness
* student wellbeing
* quality of course/course experience
* student capability
* feedback from and to students about teaching and assessment
* feedback from graduates and their employers.

Summary

8 In summary, the TLQA consultation initiative is welcomed. Issues must be clarified to ensure a sound basis of continuous professional improvement. The following considerations are of vital importance for the development of an 'ethos and culture' based on caring and sharing:

* development and recognition of professionalism in teaching (learning and assessment);

* recognition and emphasis of the crucial significance of assessment (for learning and of performance) for quality outcomes;

* development of systematic evaluation of the quality of the course and the course experience (including assessment) to include feedback from:

  - students (FT and PT)
  - HoD/peers
  - graduates
  - employers.

* development, by consultation and on an institutional basis, of a Student Charter and a Code of Ethics for staff, to establish a framework of rights and responsibilities.

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*Paper (1 December 1994) was prepared as a brief submission in response to a letter (17 November 1994) from the UPGC indicating that particular issues relating to sub-degree programmes would be part of a review of development of higher education in Hong Kong.*

## UPGC REVIEW OF DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN HONG KONG

## SUB-DEGREE WORK

1. The UPGC has asked City University to consider issues in respect of the development of higher education in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the following:

   (a) provision of sub-degree programmes;

   (b) demand for manpower at sub-degree level;

   (c) quality assurance of sub-degree programmes;

   (d) future development of sub-degree programmes; and

   (e) feasibility of a credit unit system at sub-degree level.

### Provision of Sub-degree Programmes

2. Following the decision of the Government to expand first degree places in the then City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, and as a result of the anticipated change of applicant profile for sub-degree courses, a College of Higher Vocational Studies was established in January 1991 to take over the responsibilities of provision of sub-degree courses.

3. The establishment of the College aims

   (a) to offer programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers, as well as the Hong Kong community; and

   (b) to enable a better focus on vocational education through a coordinated approach in the delivery of sub-degree programmes.

4. The College comprises three Divisions, viz. Commerce, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Technology. The Division of Commerce is responsible for courses in accountancy, business and banking; the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences in language studies and social studies; and the Division of Technology in building and computing.

5. Over the past few years, the separation of sub-degree courses from degree courses has had effects on both staff and students:

   (a) Staff members could develop their professionalism within the context of the College structure and determine priorities and initiatives without direct competition with degree programmes in the same department or faculty.

(b) Transfer of student enrolment from departments to the College caused some problems in the initial stage. Currently, College students have yet to establish departmental societies which make important contributions to student experience.

6. In 1994-95, the College offers twelve higher diploma (HD) courses and one diploma course. Courses are now well established and attract the greatest number of first choice applications under JASPIC.

7. Intake quotas of courses will be adjusted, more options in various specialized areas will be built into the existing courses, and new courses and qualifications may be introduced

   (a) to meet the required increase in the sub-degree student intake from 1994-95, of 286 FTEs for 1995-96 and 350 FTEs for 1996-97.

   (b) to respond to the community need for manpower in different areas; and

   (c) to provide more choices of vocational training for students.

8. The following is a comparison of student numbers of the last year of the current and next triennium:

| **Current triennium: 1994-95** | | **Next triennium: 1997-98 (estimated)** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full-time | Part-time | Full-time | Part-time |
| 3,264 | 2,040 | 3,852 | 2,335 |
| TOTAL : 5,304 | | TOTAL : 6,187 | |

Demand for Manpower at Sub-Degree Level

9. The EMB Report, 'Manpower 2001 Revisited' (June 1994) has projected a positive manpower balance, in 2001, of 3.9% of the estimated requirement of 173,400 persons at the sub-degree level. This may be overestimated due to the increasing direct loss of HD graduates to full-time degree study in Hong Kong and overseas (nearly 20% for CPHK HD graduates in 1993).

10. There will be an increasing demand from employers for skills at the higher vocational level as part of continuing professional development for employees. This is in accordance with the principal findings of the UPGC's commissioned report 'An Economic Analysis of Continuing Education : Costs, Benefits, Trends and Issues.' Particularly for programmes leading to qualifications, City University is well placed to provide a variety of vocational programmes in part-time mode at diploma and higher diploma level. Other possibilities include introducing a new sub-degree qualification such as the Advanced Diploma (part-time) tailored to meet the needs of traditional industries which are experiencing technological change, for example the building industry.

## Quality Assurance of Sub-Degree Programmes

11. This is dealt with in Attachment 1 *(not included)*.

## Future Development of Sub-Degree Programmes

12. As noted in para 10, it is envisaged that an important development will be part-time programmes to meet employer requirements for continuing professional development to 'add value' to their staff. These programmes will be on a self-financing basis.

13. Another important development is the reduction of the duration of the diploma-entry, part-time mode of the HD from four to three years. This is already in place for two HD programmes and part of the revalidation of a third.

14. A particularly important development could be franchise opportunities for joint ventures with organisations in China.

15. Finally, a fundamental development which would require policy and coordination would be the development of a credit unit system for all sub-degree programmes in Hong Kong (see below).

16. With the planned increase in FYFD places, it was expected that the student profile of first-degree places would change with fewer Form 7 (HKALE) applicants and enrolments. Accordingly, HD programmes at City University are designed for a Form 5 (HKCEE) intake and this is the focus of the College's marketing strategy. Trends in the entry characteristics of students are monitored carefully and it is relevant to note the sudden change, for the 1993-94 entry, of HKALE entry.

| **HKAL Passes** | **1990/91** | **1991/92** | **1992/93** | **1993/94** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 60% | 68% | 65% | 39% |
| 1 | 32% | 22% | 21% | 42% |
| >1 | 8% | 10% | 14% | 19% |

17. With regard to international recognition, an offer of accreditation for ten HD programmes by the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) of UK has been received based on an assessment carried out by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN). If the agreement is approved, HD graduates would be eligible for a separate BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) awarded by UNN. This would be organised on a cost recovery basis with students opting to register at the beginning of the second year (FT) and fulfilling the Common Skills assessment required by BTEC for all HNDs.

## Feasibility of a Credit Unit System at Sub-Degree Level

18. Not only is this feasible but it would be very worthwhile in terms of flexibility for matters such as:

    (a) enabling students to change modes of study to meet changing circumstances;

    (b) keeping programmes up to date with new or updated modules;

    (c) relaxing time constraints for course completion;

    (d) improving recognition of prior work/study;

    (e) enabling the development of cooperative education, i.e. the integration of work place learning and university learning.

19. One example of advantage for HD graduates is the recognition by the Hong Kong Open Learning Institute (OLI) of the HD in Business Studies and the HD in Computer Studies, for 60 block credits and 20 specific credits towards the corresponding honours degree.

20. The feasibility would require systemic coordination of all diploma and higher diploma programmes offered by CityU, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Vocational Training Council and OLI. Development of a vocational qualifications framework would be appropriate. A sub-degree credit unit system could then be the basis for articulation with a similar development for degree programmes.

## Other Sources of Information for Sub-Degree Programmes at City University

Chan, D and Imrie B W 'Marketing Higher Diploma Courses in the Hong Kong Context' (1993).

Imrie, B W 'Current Labour Market Considerations in Hong Kong : Developments at the Higher Vocational Level' (1994).

Information Leaflets College of Higher Vocational Studies (1994) (includes 'Standing and Standard of the Higher Diploma').

Patel, S G and Imrie, B W 'Higher Vocational Education in Hong Kong' (1994).

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*Presented at the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA) Conference in Bangkok, Thailand, 1992.*

# ASSESSMENT FOR QUALITY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

## Introduction

In a national context, qualifications such as the degree and the higher diploma are expected to represent minimum national standards. In turn, such qualifications may be recognised internationally on the basis of satisfactory quality assurance. The relevant considerations relate to the procedures used to validate a programme or course of study and to accredit a particular institution to teach the programme and award the qualification.

In this regard, assessment of student performance is a crucial element of quality in higher education. For the purpose of this paper, the discussion will relate to the higher diploma in the context of Hong Kong with particular reference to City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK). Similar considerations relate to other countries, for example Scotland and New Zealand. In the former, the Scottish Vocational Educational Council (SCOTVEC) ensures national standards for vocational qualifications which include the higher national diploma; in the latter, a similar responsibility was discharged by the Authority for Advanced Vocation Awards (AAVA) in regard to the New Zealand certificate. The AAVA has been disestablished and its functions transferred to the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

## Hong Kong

As in the case of most countries represented at this Conference, higher education continues to develop and change. Hong Kong is no exception and there has been considerable change during the last ten years. A wide range of higher diploma courses which will be available for enrolment in 1993/94 - this will include the first intakes to two new technical colleges established under auspices of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) which is also responsible for seven technical institutes providing courses up to diploma[1] level. On the other hand, CPHK and the Hong Kong Polytechnic (HKP) come under the control of the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) and are expected to have the same target size and overall profile. In general terms this means that, for the next triennium (1992/3 to 1994/5), CPHK and HKP should provide for 65% of the students (FTE) to be enrolled in degree work and 35% in higher diploma courses.

The VTC is responsible for the quality of programmes in the technical colleges and the polytechnics themselves are responsible for the validation of their own higher diplomas. Validation of degree courses in the polytechnics is the responsibility of the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) set up in 1990. Development of these quality assurance provisions will continue with a UPGC institutional review of both polytechnics in January 1993 to consider self accreditation for all courses.

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[1] The diploma is a two year, full-time course with entry based on the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) taken in Form 5.

## City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK)

CPHK was established in 1984, as part of the Hong Kong Government's intention to provide tertiary education places for 18% of the territory's age cohort (17-20). In 1990, as part of organisational restructuring, CPHK established three faculties to oversee degree courses and postgraduate work; also a College of Higher Vocational Studies to oversee eleven higher diploma courses and one diploma course - in effect a fourth vocational faculty. The College completed its first full academic year in 1991-92 and, as noted above, is responsible for about 35% of the CPHK's student population. The basic mission statement of the College is straight forward:

> "The College aims to provide programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers and the community of Hong Kong."

To assist the College with the implementation of this mission statement, five Course Advisory Committees have been set up to provide a mechanism for employer involvement in the planning and development of current and future courses. This is a particularly important part of quality assurance aimed at acceptability of the courses and their graduates by employers and by professional bodies. Quality assurance implications are illustrated by an example reported recently[2]:

> "Law graduates at City Polytechnic will sit controversial exams today to enter the legal **profession** after papers were redrafted because the originals were **too easy**.... The legal **profession** and external examiners had insisted the papers were **too easy** and, in some cases, instructions for students were unclear."

### Course requirements

Many national systems of vocational education use a modular design for courses leading to qualifications. At City Polytechnic all courses are modular and the module document specifies objectives, content and assessment requirements. The assessment outcomes for each module are then combined for the overall assessment of performance for each year, and ultimately the allocation of a passing grade for students who complete the requirements for graduation. In effect, the module document provides the basis of a contract between the student enrolling for the course, and the institution responsible for the quality of the course and the award related to it.

Using the definition of teaching as "the initiation and management of learning" from the Warnock Report (1990) for the then polytechnic sector of England, assessment is clearly part of the management of learning. Accordingly, the objectives must be clearly stated in terms of type and level of learning so that the assessment procedures can be used to confirm appropriate outcomes.

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[2] "Too easy" law exams reset, South China Morning Post, 16.6.1992.

## Quality Assurance Requirements

Some further definitions are appropriate. One source of definition is BS5750 or ISO9000 which is widely used throughout Europe:

> Quality Assurance : "All those planned and systematic actions necessary to provide adequate confidence that a product or service will satisfy given requirements of quality."[3]

Assessment of student performance involves many planned and systematic actions, and it is also appropriate to provide a definition of assessment:

> Derivation and communication of information and judgements about student learning and performance, for the purpose of guiding learning and reporting on student progress and achievement in a course of study. (CPHK, 1992)

Consistent with this definition, therefore, the following actions need to be planned and systematic: assessment procedures (setting, moderating, marking), mark interpretation and reporting, and finally decision making. The public, employers, professional bodies, and the students all have a right to expect that these actions are carried out professionally, i.e. skills and judgements will be of an appropriate quality to provide confidence in the process and in the outcomes.

## Institutional Policy and Guidelines

In another paper (Imrie, 1981) general issues were addressed relating to the need for policy in relation to staff development in universities - see later. Similar issues apply to policy for assessment and its implementation. There are three principal reasons for an institution of higher education to have a (strong) policy on assessment. The first is external accountability - the university can say that it has a policy! The second reason is to ensure that procedures are in place which are consistent with policy and monitored accordingly. The third reason is for staff to be able to explain assessment requirements to students.

At CPHK, after an extensive review of experience during the preceding three years, including from External Examiners, a policy statement was developed as a consultative document (CPHK, 1992). Also approved was the need for guidelines for good practice. Because institutional guidelines are often considered to have the force of regulations the following statement was emphasised:

> In general, **policies** relate to the required actions and responsibilities of staff while **guidelines** are to inform staff of procedures which can be used to ensure appropriate processes and outcomes. (CPHK, 1992)

The rationale for guidelines for good practice is the obvious requirement to ensure implementation and application of policy-related procedures. It is incumbent on the institution to indicate good practice while acknowledging that other procedures might also be justifiable. Provision is thus made for both control and freedom (Imrie, 1981).

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[3] In fact, the definition comes from BS4748 Quality : Part 1 : 1987.

The review indicated that existing policies were not being implemented adequately across the institution. The outcome may be considered as a form of academic anarchy. As noted by Höltta and Halonen[4], management strategy for stronger academic leadership can be developed with 'more power and responsibility delegated to individual academic leaders ..... to prevent the growth of the built in anarchic elements of the academic organization'.

## Staff Training and Development

If assessment policies and procedures are to be implemented effectively, then staff training and development (T&D) is essential. Academic staff are usually appointed on the basis of discipline competence indicated by relevant academic qualifications and professional experience. T&D are required to develop appropriate professional competence for the management of learning for which assessment (summative and formative) is crucial.

A hallmark of professionalism is, of course, that of reading the literature and there is an extensive literature on assessment of student performance. For example, Crooks (1988) has prepared a particularly useful guide[5] to assessing student performance. Imrie and Hall (1988) describe an in-service professional development programme for teachers in vocational education which comprises 19 modules - available on disk (AppleMac Word, IBM WordPerfect).

A particular example of the need for T&D is taken from Module A1 'An introduction to some assessment problems' - the Hardgrind case study[6]. This illustrates the point that, when marks for different assessment components (and examination questions) are combined, errors will be automatically introduced for grading purposes if allowance is not made for significant differences in mark distribution. This is distinct from setting an overall pass level which is independent of pass rate. In turn, this is dependent on the intention of the weighting assigned to the different assessment components. These are quality-related decisions requiring informed professional judgement.

## Students

On the basis that professionalism implies accountability which in turn implies evaluation, then assessment and examinations should be evaluated - by the students. Details of evaluation of the final examination are provided by Imrie (1982). Students may not be 'right' but they have a right to express their views on matters which directly affect their educational experiences. Also relevant are student rights and the following assessment-related rights are identified by Imrie (1991):

- The RIGHT to coursework or work done during the course that provides opportunity for practice and for prompt feedback to improve subsequent performance leading to quality outcomes.

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[4] Paper presented to the International Conference of University Administrators, Twente University, The Netherlands, 1991.

[5] The Green Guide series for staff in tertiary education, published by the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA), (Heather Koch); PO Box 516, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614, Australia.

[6] A subsequent paper might be of interest, Imrie B W 'Hardgrind Revisited', Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 1993.

- The RIGHT to know what is required for assessment of performance and how to succeed.
- The RIGHT to a grading system which is fair and consistent. The principles and procedures of a grading system should be clearly specified so that the responsibilities of staff and the rights of students are identified.
- The RIGHT to have explained the processes and the assumptions which are involved when judgements are made about student performance.

## Concluding Comments

In general, in tertiary education, students have one-chance opportunities for being assessed during a course. Assessment for quality in vocational education is vitally important and implications include:

> 'Doing the right thing right, the first time.' (A definition of quality)
>
> 'That which is unexamined is without meaning.' (Socrates)
>
> 'Examinations, and indeed the whole assessment system, provide the main incentives for students.' (Entwistle, 1976)
>
> '..... no one should imagine that standards are other than matters of judgement based on experience.' (Adams, 1985)

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*Presented at the Fifth International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education, Bonn, Germany, 1993.*

# QUALITY OF LEARNING : ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

## Abstract

Assuming that quality of learning necessarily involves assessment of student performance, this paper proposes particular actions consistent with professionalism and scholarship. The actions are:

- work on an assessment project
- communicate the outcomes i.e. publish
- develop resources to improve assessment thereby improving the quality of learning.

Accordingly, the paper describes an assessment project, opportunities to publish and some resources to improve assessment. Definitions are provided.

The project was that of a Working Party on Assessment set up to prepare an institutional 'Assessment Policy and Guidelines'; the outcomes are discussed, together with implications which are likely to be relevant to most institutions of higher education.

If staff do not 'care' about assessment to enhance quality of learning and to improve subsequent performance then, by definition, quality of learning will be reduced. Quality deficit will also be evident in the judgements of performance leading to grades as outcomes.

Publication opportunities are discussed - also the availability of resources to improve assessment and ensure good practice.

## Introduction

If we believe in high educational standards and that quality of learning must necessarily involve assessment, what then are the issues? If we also believe that our work in higher education should represent commitment to appropriate standards of professionalism and scholarship, then what should we be doing as part of that commitment? I suggest that each of us should

- work on an assessment project

- communicate the outcomes i.e. publish

- develop resources to improve assessment thereby improving the quality of learning.

Accordingly, I will describe an assessment project, opportunities to publish and some resources to improve assessment.

## Definitions

The vocabulary of education is not yet truly international so one or two definitions are required to avoid needless confusion. For example, assessment will be used in association with student performance and evaluation for staff performance.

> **Assessment** - derivation and communication of information and judgements about student learning and performance, for the purpose of guiding learning and reporting on student progress and achievement in a course of study.
>
> **Scholarship** - in general the work of academics can be thought of as having four separate, yet overlapping functions in terms of the scholarship of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. (Boyer, 1990)
>
> **Teaching** - the initiation and management of learning. (Warnock, 1990)
>
> **Learning** - the complete definition of learning emphasises the notion of a relatively permanent change in behaviour as a function of practice or experience. (Davis et al, 1974)

Among others, Lai and Biggs (1992) have noted that there is a substantial research literature on qualitative aspects of student learning, and how task requirements can affect the kind of learning students undertake. As an example, they refer to work by Tang (1991) which shows specifically that "Hong Kong tertiary students switched from low level to high level assessment preparation strategies according to their perceptions of the demands placed upon them by test and by assignment modes of assessment".

## Chinese students

As noted by Watkins (1992), many Chinese students interweave the processes of memorising (surface level) and understanding (deep level):

> "My own research in Hong Kong indicates that this may have come about almost incidentally. Chinese teachers place such a premium on reproducing model answers that pure rote learning cannot cope with the memory load. So many students are forced to understand what they are learning as an aid to recall. Having mastered 'incidental understanding', such students are in a better position to cope when assessment demands higher quality learning outcomes where understanding is required."

## An Assessment Project

The definition of assessment arose from a project - a Working Party on Assessment set up by a committee of the Academic Board of City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK) to study reported issues and to prepare an institutional 'Assessment Policy and Guidelines'. The Working Party proposed the above definition to emphasise the importance of formative assessment - feedback to the student to enhance quality of learning and improve subsequent performance; as distinct from summative assessment involving 'final' judgements in the form of grades.

We decided that what needed to be done should include

- identification of the principal issues;
- development of a policy statement on assessment including principles (and a definition);
- development of guidelines for good practice (fit for their purpose) and clearly linked to the CPHK context of principles (above), existing regulations and current practice;
- proposals for policy implementation including the provision of resources - information, training, software packages.

**Publication Opportunities**

An implication of scholarship (as defined) is that of publication - to test thinking (and writing) against the judgements of practitioners. Evidently conferences provide publication opportunities.

However, a particularly useful opportunity for publication is provided by the international (refereed) journal 'Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education' (AEHE). The Journal is aimed at all higher education practitioners and sets out to provide readily accessible, up-to-date information about significant developments in the field. Also noted is that AEHE welcomes pragmatic, research-based or reflective studies which help to illuminate the everyday practice of assessment & evaluation in higher education. AEHE welcomes papers, brief reports and book reviews.

Internal publications, such as 'Assessment Policy and Guidelines', also represent scholarship. This has been published internally after a process of (peer) review by the various practitioners on College/Faculty Boards. One particular outcome, in conjunction with the outcomes of another working party, will be the 'publication' of a spreadsheet package as an 'intelligent assistant' to cope with the assessment responsibilities of busy practitioners - as we all are!

**Resources**

These publications are also resources. Another resource, available to conference participants on disk, is 'Assessment of Student Performance' (Imrie and Hall, 1988). This is an in-service professional development programme based on 19 modules prepared for self study or discussion groups.

**Attitudes**

The Working Party found serious deficiencies in some of the assessment practices. These included:

- lack of knowledge of current policies and procedures
- neglect of procedures
- lack of awareness of the effects and implications of combining sets of marks
- lack of care in matching assessment levels of learning to intended objectives

- lack of interest in spending time on feedback (with time as a resource staff are under pressure with adverse student/staff ratios and publication priorities).

Two contrasting attitudes are noted: Lauer (1992) writing about students cheating, comments on "the horrendous tedium of having to make up and grade exams all by ourselves". Is it not appropriate to consider an examination paper as an act of scholarship - as a publication in its own right, and grading as a crucially important responsibility?

Sparkes (1992) quotes Edwards Deming, 'everyone doing their best is not enough, it is first necessary to know what to do' and concludes that, "It is time more effort was put into ensuring that educational methods match the chosen educational aims." In my view assessment is fundamentally an educational method.

## Quality

Quality is doing the right thing right the first time; fitness for purpose (Ball, 1985); specifying worthwhile goals and enabling students to achieve them. There are various other 'definitions'.

Let me construct a sequence of thought from Pirsig (1977):

"Quality exists, whether it is defined or not. People differ about Quality, not because Quality is different, but because people are different in terms of experience. She said 'I hope you are teaching Quality to your students'. His Quality - 'excellence', 'worth', 'goodness' - was not a physical property and was not measurable."

"Quality isn't method. It's the goal toward which method is aimed. Quality itself... is the inverse side of caring. That is what caring really is, a feeling of identification with what one's doing. My present feeling is that this is how any further improvements of the world will be done: by individuals making Quality decisions and that's all."

The relationship of quality with caring is crucial and leads to the importance of being care-full with assessment as distinct from care-less. The quality implications include time, capability and commitment. At the first of these conferences, in 1989, I discussed Pirsig's concepts and suggested a more mundane definition of quality, in higher education, as "evident capability of performance or function with reference to desired standards and criteria". (Imrie, 1989)

In the Guidelines, the section on quality states that quality in student assessment is better assured if:

- those directly responsible for the delivery of the educational experience have a sense of ownership of the procedures,
- the institutional ethos is conducive to self-evaluation and self-criticism,
- sufficient resources are devoted to the process of developing effective assessment strategies and techniques,
- there is a commitment to acting upon the results,
- there is a sharing of good practice. (CPHK, 1992)

As part of CPHK's continuing commitment to quality, the Academic Board has recently established a standing committee - the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The strategy to promote a 'quality ethos' includes a series of seminars and the second was presented by John Biggs, Professor of Education at the University of Hong Kong. His wide ranging paper on 'Assessing Learning Quality: Reconciling Institutional, Staff, and Educational Demands' emphasised the crucial significance of the following generalisation:

> 'The quickest way to change student learning is to change the assessment system.'
> (Elton & Laurillard, 1979)

**Policies and Responsibilities**

All of the above considerations were addressed in the development of the 'Assessment Policy and Guidelines' - the Working Party did, in deed, care about the intended outcomes of sharing good practice. Responsibilities and commitment are also crucial issues.

In discussion when the Working Party's report was presented, there was concern about the implications of the section on student rights. While it was 'conceded' that students did have rights, stating these rights might lead to disputes. The section was revised as 'Assessment Responsibilities: Institutional, Staff and Students'.

In general, policies relate to the required actions and responsibilities of staff while guidelines are to inform staff of procedures which can be used to ensure appropriate processes and outcomes. This is stated in the foreword to the Guidelines.

Commitment to policy implementation must be a continuous responsibility - from management to the individual practitioner. Policy implementation is the ultimate performance indicator or PI. Without effective policy implementation then academic anarchy occurs. As noted by Höltta and Haloven (1991), more power and responsibility should be delegated to individual academic leaders.. "to prevent the growth of the built-in anarchic elements of the academic organisation".

With power and responsibility there must be accountability not just because of professionalism but because assessment directly and profoundly affects the learning of our students and their aspirations. In this regard our caring as well as our capability must be evident to our students as part of our stewardship (not ownership) of quality in higher education.

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# MARKETING HIGHER DIPLOMA COURSES IN THE HONG KONG CONTEXT

**Dominic Chan and Bradford W Imrie**

## Abstract

In Hong Kong, Higher Diploma (HD) education has not received sufficient recognition. Although the objectives and nature of HD courses are quite distinct from that of degree courses, people generally regard the higher diploma as 'sub-degree' in the literal sense.

The paper describes the present standing and standard of the HD qualification. It emphasizes the vocational nature of HD education and its importance for productivity and sustainable economic and social development. HD graduates take up employment in the public and private sectors as senior vocational staff usually with middle management responsibilities. There is a need to promote this understanding among parents and students, employers and professional bodies, and to market HD courses vigorously.

In 1991, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong established a vocational faculty - the College of Higher Vocational Studies to coordinate and administer HD courses. The College has adopted a proactive approach in promoting its courses to about 470 secondary schools. Various programmes were organized for school careers teachers and senior form students. Special marketing and information materials were produced, including video, leaflets and an electronic prospectus. So far such efforts have met with reasonably good responses but much more needs to be done.

## Introduction

At the International Vocational Education and Training Association Conference held in Bangkok last year, His Excellency Professor Kasem Suwanagul (1992), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of University Affairs, Thailand, delivered the opening address in which he emphasized:

> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education, either at the secondary or post-secondary level, can be the first step on the ladder to further education and/or a rewarding and lucrative career."

In Hong Kong we see this statement as particularly relevant. First, like many of our neighbours in the Asia Pacific, Hong Kong's economy has been growing very rapidly over the past two decades, and will probably continue to do so after 1997 when Hong Kong becomes a Special Administrative Region of China. Economic affluence, apart from making tertiary education more affordable to people, also fosters higher aspirations and students are encouraged to pursue academic degrees rather than vocational qualifications. Second, traditionally, Chinese people attach great importance to learning and study. Indeed, in ancient China, studying for the Imperial Examinations was the only way for people to climb the social ladder and proceed to officialdom or ruling class. The perception that blue collar jobs are inferior to white collar jobs is still widely held. Both of the above factors do hinder the recognition of the higher diploma as a respectable vocational qualification in Hong Kong. The higher diploma has so often been referred to as a 'sub-degree' qualification in the literal sense that higher diploma courses are seen by many as second best options to degree courses, regardless of the fact that they are quite distinct in nature and have different objectives.

This phenomenon is not unique to Hong Kong. In industrial countries like the UK, higher diploma education also does not enjoy the proper recognition which it deserves. Not too long ago, the 'Times Higher' carried articles which commented on biased attitudes towards vocational education:

> "Within higher education cachet attaches to degrees. These are known and internationally recognized qualifications which put their holders into the different, esteemed category of 'graduate'.
>
> Lower level qualifications including diplomas and certificates have never achieved the same universal recognition. Constantly changed, offered by a plethora of different bodies, their currency has been uncertain and public confidence shaky." (30.10.92)
>
> "Heads of the new universities have attacked suggestions that they are deliberately trying to phase out their non-degree work now that they have been elevated to university status. They say that demand from students, parents and head teachers, as well as from some employers, is for honours degrees rather than for the vocational two year diploma and certificate courses.
>
> Geoff Pike, of the Institute of Manpower Studies, said: 'In the United Kingdom there is a sufficient supply of graduate level manpower, an insufficient supply of manpower qualified to HND or intermediate level. What happens is that employers are forced to use graduates to undertake jobs suited to people with intermediate skills. One result is an apparent shortage of graduate manpower.'" (16.10.92)

We now witness more or less the same situation in Hong Kong where, at the tertiary level, the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) is responsible for seven institutions, three of which are universities. The UPGC approves student numbers (and funding): for 1993-94, the number of students in sub-degree (mainly higher diploma) programmes will be 10,690 (23%), with 35,645 in degree programmes of whom 16,074 will be in non-university institutions. Three of these non-university institutions (Baptist College, City Polytechnic and Hong Kong Polytechnic) are hoping for university status (and name) as an outcome of UPGC Institutional Reviews in January 1993. The Vocational Training Council also provides tertiary education and two new technical colleges will enrol their first students in 1993-94, including a total of 1320 full-time higher diploma students.

While there are many junior to intermediate level vacancies in the job market, more senior posts suitable for university graduates are by no means abundant. Last year the government decided to cut back on the expanding supply of degree places as recommended by the Education Committee Report No.4 (November, 1990). However, it is still the government's objective to provide degree education opportunities for 18% of students in the relevant age group, by 1996. This would mean that students who have 'passed' the Advanced Level Examination (Form 7) will almost all obtain a degree place at one of the seven Hong Kong tertiary institutions. Therefore, secondary school graduates have considerable incentive to go on to Form 6 rather than to enrol on a higher diploma course. Some of them then find themselves not cut out for academic studies after Form 6 or Form 7 and apply for admission to higher diploma courses. In 1991/92 and 1992/93, about 40% of new intakes to City Polytechnic of Hong Kong's (CPHK) higher diploma and diploma courses had completed Form 7 and possessed one or more passes in HKALE. (For further detail, see Information Leaflet Eight.)

This is a waste of students' time and effort as well as of the resources of society. There are great benefits to be gained if educators and institutions coordinate their efforts to define the higher diploma qualification, communicate the opportunity to students, parents and employers, and actively promote higher diploma courses to secondary schools.

The College of Higher Vocational Studies of CPHK, to a certain extent, has done its part in this regard. Since its inception in 1991 as a vocational faculty in the Polytechnic and charged with the responsibility of administering higher diploma and diploma courses, the College has put considerable effort into the promotion of vocational higher diploma education. The College has established a Working Group on Higher Diploma to study various aspects of higher diploma education and a College Marketing Group to promote higher diploma courses to schools and prospective students. The latter part of this paper reflects the achievements of the above working groups.

**Standing of Higher Diploma** (Imrie, 1993a)

The Higher Diploma is the highest level of undergraduate vocational qualification in Hong Kong and represents the completion of a programme of vocational education designed to develop HD students with the attitudes, knowledge and skills required for employment in a wide range of occupations.

The Higher Diploma (HD) course is a three year full-time course with Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE) entry requirements. For 1993-94, there will be nearly 60 HD courses offered by City Polytechnic, Hong Kong Polytechnic (mainly two year full-time with Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) entry) and, for the first time, by the new Hong Kong Technical Colleges at Chai Wan and Tsing Yi (see Information Leaflet Six). Higher Diploma courses are also available in part-time mode.

The polytechnics are part of the higher education system managed by the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee while the Hong Kong Technical Colleges are the responsibility of the Vocational Training Council. It is Government policy to set tuition fees for HD courses at 75% of degree course fees.

In 1991, Government decided that there was a case for increasing the fee proportion of the costs of tertiary education - to be met by those who can afford to pay. For 1992-93, the estimated recovery rate is 10.6% and it is the Government's intention to increase this to 18% by 1997-98. As a result, degree student fees will increase by over 100% in the next two years. Details are shown in the table (Imrie, 1993b).

| Year | Estimated Cost Recovery Rate (%) | Tuition Fee (HK$) | | % increase over previous year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Degree | Sub-degree | |
| 1992-93 (A) | 8.2 | 11,600 | 9,000 | 16/20 |
| 1993-94 (A) | 10.6 | 17,000 | 12,750 | 46.6/41.7 |
| 1994-95 (I) | 13.5 | 24,000 | 18,000 | 41.2 |
| 1995-96 (I) | 16 | 31,000 | 23,250 | 29 |
| 1996-97 (I) | 17 | 36,000 | 27,000 | 16 |

(A) *Actual Fees*
(I) *Indicative Fees for 1994-95 to 1996-97*

Government's justifications for increasing the cost recovery rate, include the need to strike a reasonable balance between the students and the community in sharing the costs of implementing expansion of tertiary education; also cost recovery targets were falling behind current UK and worldwide trends. Comparison is obviously difficult - for example, inflation in Hong Kong is unlikely to drop below 8% in the next few years.

As a principle, Government has stated that the increase in tuition fees will be matched by the local Student Finance Scheme for students in need of financial assistance: 'no qualified student should be denied tertiary education through lack of funds'.

It is expected that HD graduates will take up employment in the public and private sectors of Hong Kong, which may lead to positions as senior vocational staff (SVS) with middle management responsibilities. As such they should have capabilities including vocational competence, communication skills, learning skills, information management skills and, preferably, appropriate project management skills, together with appreciation of social, economic and political development in Hong Kong.

Standing can also be related to the 'market value' of the HD/D qualification i.e. financial standing on first employment. In Hong Kong, although the private sector works as a market economy and employs many of the HD/D graduates, a significant number are employed in the public sector for which staffing requirements and salary levels are determined by Government. Public service employment, however, does not have uniform recognition of the HD qualification and this is being addressed.

**Basic Monthly Salary by Level of Award - A Comparison of 1990 to 1992 Graduates**

| **Level of Award** | **Year of Graduation** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **1990**<br>**[HK$]** | **1991**<br>**[HK$]** | **1992**<br>**[HK$]** |
| Bachelor Degree (BD) | 7844 (19.6%) | 7598 (-3.2%) | 8205 (8.0%) |
| *Difference (BD-HD)* | 1453 | 887 | 766 |
| Higher Diploma (HD) | 6391 (13.9%) | 6711 (5.0%) | 7439 (10.8%) |
| *Proportion (HD/BD)* | 81.5% | 88.3% | 90.7% |
| Diploma (D) | 8021 (22.5%) | 8803 (9.7%) | 9811 (11.5%) |
| **Overall** | **7046 (17.3%)*** | **7368 (4.6%)*** | **8028 (9.0%)*** |

Source: *Graduate Employment Survey 1992 - Student Affairs Office, CPHK*
* *(% of increase over previous year)*

The table shows the average salaries of diplomates on first employment compared with first degree graduates from CPHK. In general, the gap between the HD and degree graduates is narrowing. The apparent anomaly of the two year Diploma graduate is due to social work training being tailored to Government requirements. As noted in the report from the Student Affairs Office (SAO, 1993):

> "There was a general increase in the percentage of average basic monthly salary across all level of studies. The Diploma holders enjoyed the highest percentage of salary increase (11.5%). With 93.9% employed as social workers, they were mostly paid $9875 per month according to Government pay scale. The Degree and Higher Diploma holders had an increase of 8% and 10.8% respectively. Although the Degree holders still received a higher pay ($8025) than the Higher Diploma holders ($7439), the salary difference had been drawn closer and closer from around $1500 (22.7%) in 1990 to $900 (13.2%) in 1991, and to $800 (10.3%) in 1992."

The Civil Service staff establishment and recruitment practice suggest that the government should give more recognition to Higher Diploma qualifications in general (Chan and Ng, 1993). Apart from technical positions, most Civil Service jobs do not have a level set specifically for Higher Diploma holders. The practice of appointing Higher Diploma holders to general nature 'officer grade' jobs (perhaps on an exceptional basis) at one salary point lower than Degree holders, is not ideal. The Higher Diploma qualification warrants independent recognition and an independent salary scale. Ambiguities also exist with regard to the specific training requirements for certain posts. Some require an applicant to hold a Higher Diploma (presumably a general one) or equivalent, others require an applicant to hold a Higher Diploma from certain disciplines or equivalent. Representations on these issues have been made to the Civil Service.

**Standard of Higher Diploma** (Imrie, 1993a)

Internationally, the bachelor's degree represents a benchmark standard for higher education. Not all countries have the higher diploma or higher national diploma as a qualification. In Hong Kong, the honours degree course is three year full-time with entry requirements based on HKALE. The standard of the HD is derived from the following considerations as representative of a minimum Hong Kong standard (refer to Information Leaflet Two for more details of the standing and standard of the Higher Diploma at CityU).

- The HD qualification is based on a three year, full-time course with entry requirements based on HKCEE, with provision for part-time study which meets the needs of students in employment; on this basis the Diploma is two thirds of the HD i.e. a two year, full-time course.

- The educational process should provide opportunity for competence to be developed by practice within the course and, where possible, by workplace or simulated experience that provides exposure to vocational practices and to role models in the form of SVS practitioners.

- The outcomes should guarantee capability based on vocational competence together with related transferable skills of communication, learning (for continuing development), and of information and project management.

- The HD qualification can be considered to be at a similar level to the Higher National Diploma (HND) of the UK Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC). HNDs have often been aligned as equivalent to Level 4 of the National Vocational Qualification (NVQs). BTEC HNDs have not yet been accredited by the National Council for Vocational Qualifications which is responsible for developing the NVQ framework.

- For advanced standing and exemption the maximum available recognition, in Hong Kong, for the HD is 50% of the three year honours degree; in the UK the maximum recognition is two thirds of the three year honours degree, and there is also direct entry to a range of Master's programmes; professional institutions do not generally accept such advanced standing.

- Professional recognition of the HD usually takes the form of full exemption from the foundation part, together with partial exemption from the vocational part, of the professional examination requirements for professional membership; full professional membership requires a relevant degree and a specified period of post-qualification relevant work experience.

**Marketing Higher Diploma Courses** (Chan and Imrie, 1993)

With the above understanding of the higher diploma in mind, the College embarked on a vigorous marketing strategy in 1991. As it was anticipated that the proportion of full-time students enrolled directly from Form 5 (HKCEE) would increase year by year and would eventually form the great majority of the HD/D courses entrants, marketing efforts were focused on Form 5 students, through their schools. There are altogether some 470 full-time secondary schools in Hong Kong. It is the College's intention to develop links with all of them in one way or another over a period of three years. When planning various marketing activities in late 1991, the College had the following general aims:

(1) to monitor trends;
(2) to develop and evaluate marketing activities on a project basis;
(3) to enhance understanding of HD/D courses, including the opportunities they provide, among secondary school students;
(4) to promote the image of City Polytechnic as well as interest in the range of HD/D courses it offers;
(5) to make contacts with secondary schools and to build working relationships with them.

**Programmes**

The College's Marketing Group was formed in November 1991 to plan, coordinate and steer marketing activities. The following programmes were formulated and carried out to achieve the above aims and objectives:

(1) Careers Staff Meetings
(2) School Visit Programmes
(3) School Liaison Programme
(4) Production of marketing materials to support the above functions.

**Implementation**

The marketing programmes are intended to be implemented annually and marketing materials updated as required. The following gives a brief account of the implementation of these programmes in 1992.

***Careers Staff Meetings***

Invitations were sent to all local secondary schools proposing four meetings, each for about 50 Careers Staff from different schools. The responses were reasonably good - about 220 or 47% schools replied positively. Meetings were held on Saturday mornings and the attendance rate averaged 75%. A total of 151 schools were represented at the four Meetings. Although the figure fell short of the planned target of 200, feedback from Careers Staff was generally very favourable.

The Meetings were the first of their kind held in CPHK. Members of the College Marketing Group and support staff from the College Office helped conduct the Meetings. The Director and Associate Director (Admin) of the Polytechnic came to address three of the Meetings. It was through these Meetings that the College started to establish direct communication with a large number of secondary schools. One result was that several enthusiastic Careers Staff subsequently contributed to the College's other activities, e.g. offered comments on the draft of the 'Student Guide'; provided school calendars to help the College plan marketing programmes. Some Careers Staff also arranged for their students to visit CPHK.

### *School Visit Programmes*

Building on the experience of a pilot CPHK School Visit Programme held in November 1991, three similar programmes were planned for the final quarter of 1992. Invitations were sent to the 151 secondary schools which participated in the College's Careers Staff Meetings. Responses were overwhelming and, as a result, an additional programme was organized to accommodate the demand. Even so, more than 15 schools were excluded. The College advised these schools to organize independent visits to CPHK through the Information Office, or invite staff to visit them and give a presentation to their students.

A total of 52 schools and 1,090 students (including some teachers) attended the four programmes. To cope with the large number of participants - about 270 at each programme, the College mobilized scores of staff and students to help give presentations and conduct campus tours. According to reports, student volunteers were generally very enthusiastic and their services were extremely valuable. Through such participation, students also developed a stronger identity with the College.

### *School Liaison Programme*

Also known as the Staff/Student Ambassadors Programme, this involved about a dozen teaching staff from each Division of the College and through them student partners were invited to visit their mother schools. The whole idea was to send volunteering students back to their own schools to share their experience at CPHK with their juniors as prospective students. The accompanying staff would give a presentation on CPHK's Higher Diploma and Diploma courses as well as forge links with the Headmaster or Careers Staff of the host school.

Much effort was required to make arrangements for staff and students and eventually there were 38 ambassador partners. Approaches were then made to the schools concerned and 21 replied positively. Most visits were done in November and December 1992, with one or two in February/March 1993.

Seven schools which had been excluded from the School Visit Programmes, invited College staff to visit them. In these cases arrangements were made, wherever possible, for students from those schools to accompany staff on the visit as if under the School Liaison Programme.

After the visit, staff were required to fill in a simple report form for evaluation purposes. The general feedback was favourable. Audiences at the presentations ranged from 40 to 400, including F.4 to F.7 students. Student ambassadors were again reported to be very helpful.

## *Production of Marketing Materials*

In support of the above programmes, various marketing materials were produced and most of them have been updated for the next round of similar programmes in 1993. The marketing materials include:

*College Leaflet*
A full colour leaflet describes the HD/D courses in general together with employment and further study opportunities provided, as well as facilities at CPHK.

*Admissions Information Leaflet*
This sets out application procedures and entrance requirements for the College's courses in some detail.

*Course Leaflets*
A series of 13 bilingual leaflets, one for each course. The contents include course objectives, course structure, areas of study, entrance requirements, professional recognition and exemptions.

*Electronic Prospectus*
A PC diskette with general information on CPHK and its facilities, HD/D courses offered, entrance requirements and application procedures. The diskette runs on all PCs (from XT upward) and is very easy to use. This was based on a development at the University of Glasgow.

*College Video*
A Cantonese video of eight minutes duration. It introduces the HD/D courses offered by CPHK and features interviews with industry leaders, students and graduates.

*Presentation Slides*
A set of more than 50 slides showing mainly the state-of-the-art facilities at CPHK. The slides are intended for outreach presentations.

*Presentation Transparencies*
A set of colour and b/w transparencies which depict the academic structure of CPHK, the HD/D courses offered, general entrance requirements, statistics on employment and further studies.

The feedback from schools indicated that Chinese is the most suitable written communication medium with secondary school students; if English is used it should be in plain and simple language. This point has been heeded in the process of updating the above marketing materials. For example, the Admissions Information Leaflet is very much simplified and printed as a poster; the series of bilingual Course Leaflets adopt a more or less standard format with simple English and point form presentation; finally a new Cantonese video which proved to be more appealing to secondary school students was produced.

### Outcome

After the first year of activity, systematic feedback has provided the College with a much improved understanding of the needs of secondary school students. Improvements have thus been made to marketing materials in the process of updating them. More information has also been gathered to show that HD/D courses provide good opportunities for students, in terms of both employment and further studies. The experience gained in 1992 has enabled the College to develop plans for future marketing activities.

Apart from the published general aims of the College's marketing activities, there were also spin-offs which should be acknowledged. The above programmes, particularly the School Visit Programme and the School Liaison Programme, involved a large number of staff and students. Such involvement was good experience for them and fostered a stronger College identity among staff and students. The cooperation and coordination required in the implementation of various marketing projects also strengthened esprit de corps. Accordingly, a wider participation in marketing activities by staff and students will be encouraged.

While the effects of marketing may not show up immediately, it is encouraging to note that the number of first choice applications for courses offered by the College increased from 20,112 in 1991/92 to 25,777 in 1992/93 (up 28.5%), and the application to places ratio (APR) also rose from 21.9 : 1 to 22.4 : 1 even with an increased intake from 920 to 1,150 overall. Unfortunately, due to the introduction of the new Hong Kong-wide applications system, direct comparison will not be possible for 1993/94.

### Looking Ahead

As mentioned earlier, the College sees marketing as an on-going activity. The programmes will be repeated in their existing forms or improved forms every year. Evaluation of the programmes will continue to be made, mainly through seeking feedback from the participants. This form of evaluation has its limitations since response rates tend to be low and not representative. Those who care to reply to questionnaires usually give courteous and favourable comments. A more objective assessment of the effectiveness of the College's marketing activities will be made by monitoring the trends in applications in the next few years.

However, due consideration should be given to two new factors which will come into play in 1993/94 and which may have an impact on the recruitment of students. First, the joint application scheme of the Polytechnics will be extended to include two new Technical Colleges and seven Technical Institutes. This will certainly make the competition for students keener. Second, the substantial increase in tuition fee for HD/D courses at Polytechnics may act as a deterrent and offset some of the marketing efforts. The negative effect of these two factors is not easy to gauge but should not be overlooked. In the longer term, university status and title for CPHK are expected in 1994; less predictable will be the effect of 1997 and Hong Kong's transition to a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

## From Micro to Macro

Arguably, the marketing initiatives carried out so far by the College of Higher Vocational Studies, CPHK, have been focussed on the College's courses. An evaluation of the marketing activities in 1992 against the marketing objectives set out earlier, would suggest that the College Marketing Group has achieved more with objectives 4 and 5 than with objective 3. Hence, more should be done to enhance the understanding of HD/D courses, and the opportunities they provide, among secondary school students. A more ambitious goal is to promote such understanding not only to students, but also to parents, employers and society at large. There is a practical need to emphasize the vocational nature of HD education and its importance for productivity and sustainable economic and social development.

The biased perception of higher diplomas as 'sub-degrees' should be corrected since, in their own right, they represent the highest level of vocational qualifications available to the school-leaver. This calls for a concerted effort by all parties involved in the provision of higher diploma education. The College is discussing the issues with the parties concerned, including Hong Kong Polytechnic, the two new Technical Colleges, as well as the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee, the Vocational Training Council, the Economic and Manpower Branch and the Civil Service Branch of the Government. It is hoped that by working together, a macro view of marketing higher diploma education can be formed and put into practice. This will benefit students, educators, businesses and the Hong Kong economy as a whole.

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# HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN HONG KONG

**Shantilal G Patel and Bradford W Imrie**

## Abstract

The Higher Diploma (HD), the highest undergraduate vocational qualification in Hong Kong, is currently offered by City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Polytechnic, the Open Learning Institute, and the Vocational Training Council of Hong Kong. In the absence of a lead body (such as the Business and Technology Education Council in England), these bodies have complete autonomy over their own courses.

Among the major observations of this paper are: (1) In the past there was an upward academic drift in the HDs in Hong Kong with the entry requirements for the HD exceeded by student qualifications, reflecting the high demand for tertiary education and the limited number of degree places available. Consequently, the HD was taught and assessed to a high standard (at least equivalent to an ordinary degree). (2) The HD at City Polytechnic continues to be seen by a significant number of students as a prelude to further academic studies or professional qualifications, rather than as preparation for vocational employment. (3) With the rapid expansion of tertiary education in Hong Kong in recent years the qualifications of future intake cohorts are expected to reflect the appropriate level of the HD. (4) There is concern regarding the declining language (English and Chinese) proficiency standards of students entering the HD programmes, to some extent due to the rapid expansion of tertiary education in Hong Kong. (5) Employment status and salaries of HD graduates compared with first degree graduates, reflect government perception (public sector) as well as supply and demand in the private sector. (6) There should be a review and classification of all higher educational qualifications in Hong Kong prior to 1997.

## Introduction

This paper reports some aspects of a wide ranging study to evaluate the standard and perceptions of vocational education in Hong Kong and identifies the major issues in evaluating the standard and status of the Higher Diploma (HD) in Hong Kong and, in particular, at City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK). The paper discusses perceptions of the HD, of educators, professional bodies, government and the community in general. Where appropriate, comparisons are made with the HD as taught at other institutions in Hong Kong. In terms of the level of qualification, a comparison is also made with the degree. Finally, some recommendations are made and issues for further discussion are identified.

The HD, the highest undergraduate vocational qualification in Hong Kong, is currently offered by the CPHK, Hong Kong Polytechnic (HKP), the two new Technical Colleges of the Vocational Training Council of Hong Kong (VTC) and by the Open Learning Institute (OLI) of Hong Kong. For the academic year 1994-95, there will be more than fifty HD courses on offer in Hong Kong. The range of HD courses in Hong Kong is diverse and covers the whole spectrum of vocational studies from commerce and business studies to humanities, social sciences and technology. The courses are offered both in the full-time and part-time mode and the duration of courses can be 2 to 3 years full-time and 3 to 4 years part-time or longer. (See Information Leaflet Six)

## Higher Diploma Definitions

In the absence of a central body (such as the Business and Technology Education Council in England) there is no clear definition of the HD in Hong Kong. Although the Vocational Training Council has the overall responsibility for vocational (sub-degree) education in Hong Kong, the two UPGC institutions (CPHK and HKP) offering the Higher Diploma, the highest undergraduate vocational qualification, have complete autonomy over their own respective courses. (Both are expected to have university status/title by the end of 1994.) The OLI also has autonomy for sub-degree courses but the degree courses are validated by the HK Council for Academic Accreditation.

The HD can be variously defined in terms of:

| | |
|---|---|
| ENTRY LEVEL | - necessary prior academic qualifications for entry to a course or other entry requirements such as work experience; |
| DURATION | - time measurements such as 'years', semesters, weeks, hours; also credits; |
| FOCUS | - vocational focus and level of educational development and skills attainment intended during the course; |
| OUTCOME | - competencies expected of graduates upon qualification. |

The Hong Kong government focuses on entry in classifying education levels, for employment and determination of salary entry points, and includes the HD in the sub-degree category:

> "Non-degree undergraduate courses in the two Polytechnics requiring the completion of Sixth Form or a diploma/certificate as the minimum entrance qualification". (EMB, 1991)

This definition is clearly inconsistent with CPHK policy and practice in terms of the minimum entry requirement which is 5 passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE, ie. Form 5 graduates) and is counter to OLI's open access policy. The government's sub-degree classification includes the diploma/certificate courses in Colleges of Education and Technical Teachers' Colleges. This particular point is noteworthy in that it has implications for salary point/level at which an HD (or degree) graduate may enter into civil service employment. It is understood that the definition is being reviewed to ensure consistency. The Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) Handbook has dropped the description of higher diplomas as technician courses (1992-93); the current description is:

> "In general, higher diploma courses have an emphasis on the competence in and application of techniques and skills, placing less emphasis on the intellectual skills, synthesis and evaluation which are necessary for degree courses." (HKCAA, 1994)

A Council paper (HKCAA, 1993) offers the 'succinct' definition of a sub-degree course as one whose exit level is above Advanced Level but below degree level. In this regard it should be noted that the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination (HKALE) taken in Form 7, is the highest secondary school qualification; degree level is usually associated with a three year honours degree.

A further definition is implied by the suggestion of a system of levels (1-4) differentiated by each level being of one year course duration but with no differentiation between secondary and tertiary education. Using this approach the Higher Diploma would be 'defined' as Level 2 with the degree at Level 4. This is unsatisfactory since there is ample evidence to indicate that focus/outcome definitions set the HD at one half to two thirds of the three year honours degree. In UK terms, the HD is at least at the level of the Higher National Diploma and is recognised for entry with advanced standing of two years for the English three year honours degree.

The Business & Technology Education Council in England (BTEC), describes its Higher National Diploma (HD equivalent) in terms of outcome, with reference to a "Programme of work related education for first line professional or managerial posts".

Under the National Council for Vocational Qualifications in England (NCVQ), the HD may be classified under the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 4 (although the BTEC HNDs have not yet been formally accredited by NCVQ, they are considered to satisfy the criteria for accreditation at Level 4). Level 4 is generally considered equivalent to a pass degree and the BTEC HND is recognised, for corresponding honours degrees, as equivalent to two-thirds of the honours degree (240 v 360 points) under the NVQ scheme (NCVQ 1991, 1992).

Given the confusing proliferation of definitions there is a need for criteria for setting a minimum standard for the Higher Diploma in Hong Kong.

### Context

Both the HD and the degree are influenced by the expectations and requirements of: Government (educational expenditure and policy reflect national manpower considerations at different levels), Employers (skill and competence requirements) and the Public (career aspirations and earning power).

In general, the HD is perceived to be vocational whereas the degree has been described as academic/professional. In 1990, the proportions of undergraduates in academic and professional streams at both the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, were about equal (Choi, 1992). The degree is certainly viewed as a qualification higher than the HD.

As for employment of first degree graduates and diplomates, there is also an implicit hierarchy. HD holders are expected to occupy technical/support/lower managerial/semi-professional positions while degree graduates may expect to fill (or expect to be groomed for) managerial positions. Related considerations of employment are discussed later. The HD represents the completion of a programme of vocational education designed to develop students with the attitudes, knowledge and skills required for employment in a wide range of occupations.

Issues regarding the 'standing' and the 'standard' of the higher diploma have been addressed (CPHK, 1994b) by a working group which identified senior vocational staff (SVS) as the employment category for this higher vocational qualification (Chan and Imrie, 1993).

SVS capabilities include:

- vocational competence
- communication skills
- learning skills
- information management skills
- project management skills
- appreciation of social, economic and political development in Hong Kong.

The HD in Hong Kong is designed as a terminal vocational qualification in its own right. The Hong Kong Government, in addition to providing resources for the VTC, funds the two Polytechnics through the Universities and Polytechnics Grants Committee (UPGC) which stipulates that the Polytechnics maintain a specified proportion for degree and sub-degree level student enrolments: 64% and 36% respectively for the 1995-98 triennium. The Planning Committee for the OLI envisaged a mix of 30% sub-degree, 60% degree and 10% postgraduate, for the established OLI.

A significant proportion of students also expect the HD to be a means of obtaining exemptions from stages of professional examinations and subsequent membership of professional bodies. HD courses are recognised for exemption, on a subject for subject basis, or for membership (from Associate Examinations and Stage 1 examinations to full membership) of various local and overseas professional organisations. Many students also see the HD only as a stepping-stone to further studies as is evident from the high proportion of HD graduates who go on to pursue higher qualifications. (See section on Further Study.)

To generalise, practically all vocational education (at least in Hong Kong) is perceived by students, their parents and society in general, as of a lower standing to the degree and references to tertiary education usually mean degree education excluding consideration of the higher diploma. Many students enrol on HD courses only because they have failed to qualify for degree places. This is further reinforced by the reward and recognition systems of society (salary levels for graduates and promotion prospects for teachers). Raising the status of vocational (non-graduate) education may be the most urgent task facing society if a skills gap is to be avoided - an issue discussed in 'Manpower Outlook in the 1990s' (EMB, 1991). For example, as noted by the Minister of University Affairs, Thailand (Suwanagul, 1992):

> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education, either at the secondary or post-secondary level, can be the first step on the ladder to further education and/or a rewarding and lucrative career."

And, in the UK (Times Higher, 1992):

> "Lower level qualifications including diplomas and certificates have never received the same universal recognition (as degrees). Constantly changed, offered by a plethora of different bodies, their currency has been uncertain and public confidence shaky."

In many disciplines and in many countries both 'developed' and developing there is usually an over-supply of degree holders and a shortage of HND/HD vocationally qualified manpower.

**Duration And Entry Requirements**

Full-Time courses

The duration of full-time courses leading to the HD in Hong Kong depends on pre-entry requirements and falls into two categories;

1. Two-year (56 weeks) courses designed for HKALE entry (for example, at HKP) and,
2. Three-year (84 weeks) courses designed for HKCEE entry (at CPHK and the new HKTCs).

In the past, the minimum requirement of HKCEE for HD (both at CPHK and at HKP) has been exceeded. A significant proportion of students enrolled on the HD courses at CPHK have HKALE passes above the entry requirement: (40% in 1990, 32% in 1991 and 35% in 1992).

In terms of required hours of study (class contact) the courses vary considerably according to discipline. CPHK (1993) Academic Regulations allow for a minimum of 12 hours/week and a maximum of 24 hours/week for a three year full-time course. In practice, the hours can vary from 1190 hours for HD Banking & Financial Services, to 1428 hours for HD Translation & Interpretation and up to about 1550 hours for Building courses.

At HKP the majority of the full-time HD courses are designed for one HKALE pass (together with HKCEE passes) entry and are of 2 years' duration. Alternative acceptable qualifications for entry are a relevant Diploma or a Higher Certificate from the HKP or Technical Institutes (TIs). For the 1994-95 academic year there are only 3 courses designed for HKCEE entry. There is, however, specific provision at HKP for entry into the second year of such courses for applicants with a relevant diploma. (It is interesting to note that the entry qualification required for the diploma level courses at the HKTCs is also 5 passes at HKCEE level, a reflection of the intense competition for the limited number of places available even for vocational qualifications.)

Thus, from the viewpoint of duration, there are two kinds of full-time HDs in Hong Kong (see Appendix 1): the three year HDs (post Form 5 entry) offered at CPHK and the HK Technical Colleges, and the two year HD (post Form 7 entry with one 'A' level) at HKP.

Part-Time Courses

In the part-time mode, only CPHK, HKP and OLI offer the Higher Diploma; a lower level Higher Certificate is available for part-time students from the Hong Kong Technical Colleges.

At CPHK the HD courses are of 3 or 4 years' duration (with the requirement that the curriculum is equivalent to years 2 and 3 of the full-time course). All the part-time HDs at CPHK are equivalent to two year full-time courses for diploma level entry with provision for alternative qualifications. In effect, part-time students receive exemption from the equivalent of the first year of the full-time course but the HD qualification awarded is the same for FT and PT students alike. CPHK also has provision for mature entrants with suitable work experience. In practice, this means exemption from the formal HKCEE and diploma requirements.

The OLI (1993) launched its sub-degree programmes through its Centre for Continuing and Community Education in 1993, including three at Certificate level, seven at Diploma level and three at Higher Diploma level: Psychology, Computer Programming, Business Studies.

## Standard

During the 1980s an upward academic drift in the standard of the Higher Diploma was evident from comments from numerous External Examiners at CPHK; this was also acknowledged at HKP in their restructuring of HD courses towards HKALE entry. It is generally agreed that the HD courses have been taught and assessed at a relatively high level. Many HD courses have drifted to a higher academic level to meet the unfilled need from industry for degree-level graduates and in response to the selection of over-qualified students. Another related reason for academic drift was the high expectation of teaching staff.

However, future cohorts of HD intakes should reflect the Form 5 level entry in view of the expansion of first degree places. Another trend indicator is the student entry score; for full-time sub-degree students at CPHK this has declined over the years. There is also growing concern at CPHK about the English and Chinese language proficiency standards of students entering HD programmes. These trends are primarily a result of the rapid expansion of tertiary education in Hong Kong in recent years.

### English Language Proficiency

Over the last few years there has been a dramatic and disturbing decline in the overall percentage, from about 46% in 1990-91 to about 23% in 1993-94, of students entering full-time HD programmes with a score of 'C' or better in HKCEE English Language Syllabus 'B' (Table 1). The corresponding decline in the English proficiency standards of students entering part-time HD courses is from 30%(1991-92) to 15%(1993-94).

**Table 1 - HKCEE English B (Best Result): C or above (%)**

| | 90-91 | 91-92 | 92-93 | 93-94 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Full Time** | 45.6 | 49.5 | 38.8 | 22.5 |
| **Part Time** | 28.6 | 30.4 | 17.2 | 14.8 |

Source: Academic Planning Unit, CPHK, 1994

It has been recommended that since CPHK is an English-medium institution, English should normally be used for instructional purposes and that there should be a required minimum number of 'English for Vocational Purposes' modules per year of full-time equivalent study (Talbot, 1993).

**Outcomes**

Employment Status

According to the latest Graduate Employment Survey (1993) conducted by the Student Affairs Office of CPHK, fewer HD/D graduates, compared with degree graduates, sought full time employment (77% of HD/D graduates compared with 84% degree graduates - see Table 2). More HD graduates (19% compared with 10% degree graduates) decided to pursue further studies (see also Section on Further Education).

**Table 2 - Employment Status by Level of Award**

| Level of Award | Employment Status ('Other' not included) | | | | | | TOTAL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Employed | | Unemployed | | Further Studies | | | |
| | 92 | 93 | 92 | 93 | 92 | 93 | 92 | 93 |
| Bachelor Degree | 897<br>(85.8%) | 1050<br>(84.3%) | 22<br>(2.1%) | 30<br>(2.4%) | 103<br>(9.8%) | 129<br>(10.4%) | 1046 | 1246 |
| Higher Diploma | 767<br>(77.2%) | 683<br>(76.6%) | 16<br>(1.6%) | 20<br>(2.2%) | 190<br>(19.1%) | 173<br>(19.4%) | 993 | 892 |
| Diploma | 163<br>(96.4%) | 84<br>(89.4%) | 1<br>(0.6%) | 4<br>(4.3%) | 3<br>(1.8%) | 4<br>(4.3%) | 169 | 94 |

Source: Graduate Employment Survey, CPHK, 1992 & 1993

Salary of HD Graduates (Table 3)

The difference between the average basic monthly salary of HD graduates and degree graduates is currently about 10 percent ($8195 vs $9103). Salaries for Diploma of Social Work graduates ($10870), with most employed as social workers and on Government pay scale, were higher. It is noteworthy that, although degree holders still earn higher salaries than HD graduates, the gap has narrowed from around $1450 (18.5%) in 1990 to around $900 (10%) in 1991.

**Table 3 - Basic Monthly Salary by Level of Award**

| Level of Award | Year of Graduation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1990 [HK$] | 1991 [HK$] | 1992 [HK$] | 1993 [HK$] |
| Bachelor Degree (BD) | 7844 (19.6%) | 7598 (-3.2%) | 8205 (8.0%) | 9103 (10.9%) |
| *Difference (BD-HD)* | 1453 | 887 | 766 | 908 |
| Higher Diploma (HD) | 6391 (13.9%) | 6711 (5.0%) | 7439 (10.8%) | 8195 (10.2%) |
| *Proportion (HD/BD)* | 81.5% | 88.3% | 90.7% | 90.0% |
| Diploma | 8021 (22.5%) | 8803 (9.7%) | 9811 (11.5%) | 10870 (10.8%) |
| **Overall** | **7046 (17.3%)*** | **7368 (4.6%)*** | **8028 (9.0%)*** | **8846 (10.2%)*** |

* (% of increase over previous year)
Source: Graduate Employment Survey, CPHK 1993

## Civil Service Employment and Salary

There is a general policy in the Civil Service to distinguish between HD graduates and degree holders on salary entry points. HD graduates enter Civil Service employment on the Master Pay Scale (MPS) at one point below degree holders for 'officer grade' jobs (ie. MPS15). However, the HD graduate is at a disadvantage when competing with the degree holder for 'officer grade' positions and is only appointed in exceptional circumstances. The 'junior officer grade' positions (mainly technical) in the Civil Service which are more suitable for HD graduates carry the salary scale MPS13-23. Lower level positions in the Civil Service with a starting salary point of MPS10 do not give any special recognition to the HD qualification (Chan & Ng, 1993).

There is a need for wider dissemination of information aimed at employers and, in particular, the Civil Service regarding the standard of the HD and the competencies of HD graduates for a more uniform recognition of the HD for employment and salary determination.

## Further Study

In 1993, 19.4% (173) of the HD graduates, compared with 10.4% (129) of first degree graduates, went on to pursue further studies (Table 2). Most (90.8%) went on to pursue a Bachelor's degree, while 5.5% of those who opted for further studies enrolled on a Master's programme. More and more students see qualifications in terms of economic advantage rather than as outcomes of educational opportunities. As noted by Murby (1993), a 'qualification culture' has emerged and a sense of urgency is evident related to the imminence of 1997 when Hong Kong becomes a Special Administrative Region of China.

The majority (59%) of HD/D graduates who chose to pursue further education went overseas, mainly to the UK (84%) and USA (11%). Several universities in Australia, the UK, the USA and in Hong Kong, have accepted CPHK HD graduates with advanced standing to their Bachelor's and Master's programmes. In practice, there is a range of one to two years' credit for a Bachelor's degree.

At CPHK there are also part-time conversion courses of 2-3 years duration offered by UK universities. The CPHK Centre for Continuing Education is currently administering a conversion course for HD Computer Studies and for HD Public Administration & Management graduates, for honours degrees from the University of Ulster; also a conversion course for HD Business Studies graduates leading to an honours degree with Napier University of Edinburgh. In 1994, in regard to the HD Computer Studies, the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong confirmed up to 50% credit exemption for its honours degree in applied computing.

There is an urgent need in Hong Kong for a review and classification of all higher educational qualifications prior to 1997. This would enable the formulation of a clear and uniform policy regarding credit transfers consistent with the Government's recommendation for consideration of the adoption of a credit unit system in Hong Kong (ECR, 1988).

## Conclusions

There is a clear need to define the minimum standard of the HD in Hong Kong, possibly along the lines of the National Vocational Qualification levels in the UK. It is not sufficient to define only in terms of input levels, duration and intensity - consideration should also be given to outcomes. The process of definition should involve the stakeholders: the institutions awarding the HD, Government and professional bodies. Since different institutional jurisdictions have responsibility for the HD, there should be a central quality assurance body for co-ordination and development.

The maintenance of language standards should be a primary concern for the academic success and future employment of HD students; entry and exit standards should be monitored on an on-going basis for both Chinese and English.

Employers (including Government) need to be better informed about the significance of the Higher Diploma as the highest level of vocational qualification, and the competencies of the HD graduate.

As a matter of policy Government, in conjunction with other stakeholders, should undertake to address the issues of perceptions regarding the status of vocational education within the community and the need for vocationally qualified employees for economic and social development in the future.

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# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:
# JUDGEMENTS OF PERFORMANCE AND THE RIGHTS OF STUDENTS

## Abstract

There is discussion of rights and responsibilities related to assessment of student performance and, in particular, of the two 'rights' which contribute to the title :

* The RIGHT to professional standards of capability from teaching staff charged with responsibilities for managing student learning.

* The RIGHT to have explained the processes and the assumptions which are involved when judgements are made about their performance.

Teaching is considered to be 'the initiation and management of learning'; as such, assessment of student performance is crucial for quality outcomes. For students, the 'final' judgements are permanent and irreversible; for staff, performance should reach professional standards (also implying judgements).

The paper considers issues of professionalism with reference to the role of the academic as examiner. Consideration is also given to the role and responsibilities of the external examiner, with the academic identified as 'Janus - faced' in regard to sources of professional identity.

There is usually no requirement for academics to be trained in assessment or other aspects of teaching and learning. There is, however, an extensive literature available to the professional academic. An in-service professional development programme on assessment of student performance, comprising 19 modules (Imrie and Hall, 1988) will be available, on disk, together with information about other resources.

## Introduction

Academic staff make judgements about student performance; in turn, these judgements reflect the standards of academic institutions and therefore the professional standards of academics as teachers. Rights and responsibilities are thus involved but it has also been argued that students should not have rights - only expectations!

At the 1991 IUT Conference, in a seminar on 'The Utopian University' (Imrie, 1991a), I suggested a Bill of Rights for students (Imrie, 1991b) - a summary is given at the end of the paper. In this paper I discuss some of the rights related to assessment of student performance and, in particular, the two 'rights' which contribute to the title:

- The RIGHT to professional standards of capability from teaching staff charged with responsibilities for managing student learning.
- The RIGHT to have explained the processes and the assumptions which are involved when judgements are made about their performance.

In accordance with the Warnock Report (1990) on 'Teaching Quality', teaching is considered to be the initiation and management of learning; as such, assessment of student performance is crucially important for quality of experience and outcomes. For students, the 'final' judgements are permanent and irreversible; for staff, performance should reach professional standards (also implying judgements).

But surely we all know about assessment? After all, there is a literature on assessment and academic staff, as professionals, will read the literature? Not so, according to the lead article in a new contribution to the literature (SCED, 1991) which is entitled 'Eight Myths about Assessment' in which Gibbs (1991) writes:

> "The reason I have raised these issues again is that I believe that assessment in higher education is getting rapidly worse, largely as a consequence of resource pressures."

While I do not think it is helpful to use (as Gibbs does) words like 'stupidities' and 'stupid', I do believe that the issues are vitally relevant to the rights of students and to the improvement of university teaching. In his PhD thesis, Warren Piper(1991) quotes this illuminating insight:

> "Eventually, I realised that examining was a 'spare time' occupation that had to be carried out speedily ... The built-in assumption was that if I knew my subject I should be able, automatically, to examine in that subject area. In my own case I found this was not true ..." (Nicholls,1985)

Is assessment getting worse? Is examining a spare time activity? Do academic staff apply the same care to assessment activities as they do to other scholarly activities? Do students have rights? Assessment issues are discussed with reference to professionalism and professional development for academic staff (faculty). The term 'university' includes colleges and polytechnics; assessment includes coursework and examination.

In this context, it is still relevant to note the Carnegie Commission proposal (1972) : "Codes of Teaching Responsibility (which) should be adopted to guide faculty members in their conduct and to inform students of what they can expect".

## Assessment and Professionalism

In 1992, City Polytechnic set up a working group on assessment to prepare an institutional 'Guide to Assessment' together with a policy statement. The following definition of assessment was developed to emphasise the formative aspects of assessment consistent with the concept 'management of learning':

> "Derivation and communication of information and judgements about student learning and performance, for the purpose of guiding learning and reporting on student progress and achievement in a course of study."

This represents a policy aim - but what is the outcome when practice does not correspond to policy? One consideration is noted by Boud (1990):

> "Some of the most profoundly depressing research on learning in higher education has demonstrated that successful performance in examinations does not even indicate that students have a good grasp of the very concepts which staff members believed the examinations to be testing."

Management of learning requires the management of assessment which depends on communication between staff and students - before and after assessment. Accordingly, as part of quality assurance students should be fully informed of assessment requirements and arrangements for feedback. Further, the information, at the beginning of each course or subject, should specify:

* WHAT is to be assessed and WHY - to establish relevance to aims and objectives;

* WHEN - with reference to an assessment timetable and to the requirements of other courses (i.e. a management requirement);

* HOW - with reference to assessment procedures including feedback (formative assessment) and provision for quality control of the outcomes of assessment.

All of the above require professionalism but discussion will focus on the last consideration with the assumption that any grading system should be valid, fair and consistent. The principles and procedures of a grading system should be stated clearly so that the responsibilities of staff and the rights (expectations?) of students are identified. Further, it is the professional responsibility of staff to be competent in all of the assessment procedures required for the allocation of grades; it is the right of students to know the specifications of any grading system which labels them permanently (Imrie 1983a).

A definition of professionalism which indicates the service nature of education is :

> "The essence of professionalism is the belief that the individual is the true unit of service, because service depends on individual qualities and individual judgement, supported by an individual responsibility which cannot be shifted on to the shoulders of others." (Hardie Boys, 1979)

As defined by the higher education project of the Royal Society of Arts, competence is one aspect of capability - surely an expectation of academic staff?. High educational standards are expected of academic staff particularly when assessment is used for grading to indicate quality of performance, i.e. educational outcomes. As noted by Ramsden (1986), academic professionalism "involves accepting uncertainty and fallibility in human judgement in deciding standards"; a comment which corresponds to the conclusion by Adams (1985), that "no-one should imagine that standards are other than matters of judgment based on experience".

The recurring theme is the professional responsibility of academic staff to be capable of making professional judgements which, by definition, can pass peer scrutiny. For academics (eg. the historian, physicist, economist), professional attributes include reading to 'keep up with the literature', peer and self evaluation, and continuing professional development. These considerations should also apply to the academic as teacher.

Assessment is the most important professional responsibility of a teacher, yet there is no requirement for university teachers to be trained in this regard. That is not to deny that they have succeeded in examinations and that they will have access to counsel from more experiences colleagues and, also, to previous examination papers. It is, however, to suggest that such considerations are, at best, only superficially relevant to the quality of assessment to which students should be entitled.

As with other matters such as small group methods for teaching and learning, there is a considerable professional literature on assessment of student performance - see Crooks (1988;1989) - and the following generalisation (Entwistle, 1976) is still valid and central:

> "Examinations, and indeed the whole assessment system, provide the main incentives for students. Their study behaviour is affected by the timing and the form of examinations."

As noted by Crooks and Collins (1986), "strong relationships have been found between the procedures and criteria used for assessing student performance and the learning strategies adopted by students. Because the choice of learning strategies can greatly affect what is learned and how well it is retained, methods used to assess student performance deserve close scrutiny". These are equity implications: on the one hand the need for informed choice of method of assessment by the teacher/examiner, on the other hand the information needed by the student/examinee to be able to choose the appropriate learning strategy.

### The Academic Teacher as Examiner

Because of his standing and in the light of his concern noted earlier, it is of particular interest to note an admission by Ashby (1985):

> "For many years I taught in universities. Like most academics I assumed that the only qualification I needed was expertise in the discipline I taught. It did cross my mind that 'how to teach' might be a discipline in its own right, but I never gave it much thought. I marked thousands of examination scripts without examining what the scripts could teach me about my capacity as a teacher and examiner."

And yet, a Professor of Psychology can write (Lauer, 1992) about the "horrendous tedium of having to make up and grade exams all by ourselves"!

The UK system of external examiners is often referred to as a model for quality assurance. However, Elton (1989) is particularly critical about major deficiencies and asks the question "when will it be published?" with reference to the enquiry conducted by Warren Piper (1985, 1991). The question refers to the fact that, such were the sensitivities, publication of Warren Piper's report was restricted to a summary (ESRC, 1986). Warren Piper's PhD thesis is entitled "External Examining as an Expert Occupation". It is relevant to consider some of his findings:

> "Marking is overwhelmingly normative and a heavy reliance is placed on examiners' memories."(p658)
>
> "There is a strong case for professional training of academics, but that is a case which has been made before and has had very little impact. ...Only when the professional identity of academics is defined by the job they do, rather than the subject they teach, can we expect a professional training in teaching and examining to become a commonplace notion."(p664)

Given the evident need for quality assurance (as distinct from quality control) of the final or end of course examination, an effective system of external examining and internal moderating is clearly desirable. But, in addition, surely the perceptions of the students, based on direct experience as candidates, are both valid and vital for quality assurance of the outcomes of assessment? It has been demonstrated (Imrie, 1979; 1982) that student evaluation of a final examination is both feasible and effective, leading to the conclusion that "if evaluation of the final examination is not used, it is likely that teacher/examiner performance will be deficient".

It should also be noted that there are procedures which can be used to provide quality feedback to students immediately after the final examination as an important part of the educational experience of students. Since one of the principal advantages claimed for the final examination is that of learning by review, this is clearly desirable but occurs only rarely.

There is a literature on assessment; there is a need for systematic training; there should be accountability; each student should have

- The RIGHT to professional standards of capability from teaching staff charged with responsibilities for managing student learning.

**Assessment and Quality**

The outcomes of educational research which has focused exclusively on specific aptitude/treatment interactions, have been unsatisfactory because of the effects of other variables such as learning skill, assessment and environmental factors. Elsewhere (Imrie, 1983b) I have proposed a student-referenced assessment model so that opportunities for intervention and improvement of student experience can be identified. The model represents a conceptual relationship between the quality of a grade, the meaning of marks, the performance of a student and the quality (i.e. ability) of a student, with reference to a formal course of study. But the potential for systematic professional development can be realised only if there is teacher-student awareness of the factors involved.

Martin (1989) has developed a "Q-Model" to identify a functional relationship for quality of assessment as a function of the quality of the instrument and the quality of the process. Although the model has been developed as part of a study of the effects of modularisation, the model and the related case studies justify her commonsense generalisation that "professional judgment" is at its best when supported by active monitoring and reviewing.

On this basis it is then incumbent on the teacher/examiner, as representative of the university, to be able to explain the processes and assumptions of assessment. The outcomes will be used for inferences to be made about a student's quality for post-qualification purposes. Each student should therefore have

- The RIGHT to have explained the processes and the assumptions which are involved when judgments are made about their performance.

It is relevant to note an example of this issue in the 'Campus Report' of Indiana University - Bloomington (IUB, 1987) for which the Editor had asked for comment on the tension between academic freedom and student rights. A Professor of Education believed that professors have the right to set grades. A member of the Academic Fairness Committee, however, commented:

> "I do not think it is an over-assertion of student rights to call for the announcement of how grades will be given and to have that technique followed throughout the semester. In this way, grading conflict will be reduced and more easily handled."

The Board of Trustees of Indiana University issued a clear statement of student rights and responsibilities which starts

> "Students should have accurate and plainly stated information relating to the maintenance of acceptable academic standing, graduation requirements, and individual course objectives and requirements (see academic bulletins and Code of Academic Ethics)." (1.1)

## Concluding Comments

Readers will, of course, reach different conclusions according to their perceptions of professionalism in regard to teaching, learning and assessment. Warren Piper (1991) used the concept of the 'Janus-faced academic' when he referred to the university's two sources of professional identity: the occupation of teaching and the occupation for which students are being prepared. As others have done, he quoted (Furneaux, 1961):

> "... the university professor finds that (s)he is required to select students without having been offered any training in selection techniques, to lecture to them without having been trained in methods of teaching, and to examine them without having been instructed in the techniques of examination."

One conclusion? Very little has changed without external intervention. The academic, as university teacher, is evidently a member of the oldest non-profession.

Another conclusion? To fulfil the rhetoric of excellence, universities should have clear policies, systematically implemented and monitored, for the teaching/assessment responsibilities of academic staff.

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## BILL OF RIGHTS (SUMMARY)

**Each student has the RIGHT to equality of opportunity and to equity of educational experience.**

**The RIGHT to professional standards of capability from teaching staff charged with responsibilities for managing student learning to provide quality outcomes.**

**The RIGHT to access to 'reader-friendly' accurate information to enable them to choose, with confidence, a course and an institution; not only with reference to content but on the basis of guaranteed provisions for an individualized and caring first year experience.**

**The RIGHT to a first year experience that includes systematic diagnostic assessment or testing to provide the student with an appraisal of "preparedness" for the course, together with opportunities for improvement.**

**The RIGHT to instruction that "takes account of the fact that a curriculum reflects not only the nature of the knowledge itself, but also the nature of the knower and the knowledge-getting process".**

**Students should have the RIGHT to systematic opportunities to acquire appropriate skills of thinking and of "learning to learn".**

**The RIGHT to coursework or work done during the course that provides opportunity for practice and for prompt feedback to improve subsequent performance leading to quality outcomes.**

**The RIGHT to student-centred course management that**

**(1) emphasises the student rather than the subject;**
**(2) puts the student rather than the instructor at the centre of the class; and**
**(3) sees the individual student and teacher as constituents of a larger and powerful organism, the total teaching learning group.**

**The RIGHT to know what is required for assessment of performance and how to succeed.**

**The RIGHT to a grading system which is fair and consistent. The principles and procedures of a grading system should be stated clearly so that the responsibilities of staff and the rights of students are identified.**

**The RIGHT to have explained the processes and the assumptions which are involved when judgments are made about student performance.**

**The RIGHT to participate fully in the government and administration of the institution in which they are enrolled.**

*Paper was prepared for a seminar, in 1994, for the Certificate Course in Tertiary Education Administration and Management offered by the University of Hong Kong.*

## BINARY POLICY IN HIGHER EDUCATION - HONG KONG AND THE UK

The discussion will show that it is not accurate to refer to the 'binary system' but to consider a binary policy working within a plural system (Scott, 1983). These considerations are particularly timely at a point of evolution of a binary policy in the plural system of higher education in Hong Kong. In this regard, the HK plural system will be considered as including teacher training, Vocational Training Council (VTC) institutions, University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) institutions and the other degree granting bodies: Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong (OLI). Information can also be obtained from the 'Hong Kong Yearbook'.

In the UK White Paper 'Higher Education: A New Framework' (Cm 1541, May 1991) it was stated that 'the title of Polytechnic has never been widely understood'. Since the development of higher education in Hong Kong and its binary policy, are derived from the UK, it is useful to consider a brief chronology, as follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1216 | Oxford University |
| 1453 | Glasgow University |
| 1785 | First State University in USA |
| 1840 | Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand |
| 1841 | Hong Kong leased to UK |
| **1913** | **University of Hong Kong established** |
| 1963 | The Robbins Report |
| 1964 | UK Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) established (until 1992) |
| 1965 | (27 April) Speech by Mr Anthony Crosland at Woolwich Polytechnic (Polytechnics) |
| 1966 | White Paper: a Plan for Polytechnics and other Colleges |
| 1968 | UGC Memorandum of General Guidance to (UK) Universities (first time) |
| 1968 | Crosland meets with CVCP to discuss the meaning of the Binary Policy |
| **1972** | **Hong Kong Polytechnic established** |
| 1975 | OECD Report for England and Wales ('elegance and formal parity') |
| 1980 | Parkes, UGC Chair, advises CVCP to 'concentrate on your strengths' |
| **1984** | **City Polytechnic of Hong Kong established** |
| **1989** | **Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong (OLI) established** |
| **1990** | **Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) established** |
| 1991 | White Paper: Higher Education - A New Framework (proposals to abolish the binary line) |
| 1993 | Self-accreditation for three UPGC institutions (Baptist, CPHK, HKP) |
| **1993** | **Two new Hong Kong Technical Colleges (VTC)** offering, for the first time, a higher education qualification (Higher Diploma) the same as offered by UPGC institutions |

1993 OLI offers sub-degree programmes (including the HD) articulated with its degree programmes

**1994 Three new universities in Hong Kong**
City University of Hong Kong (CityU)
The Baptist University of Hong Kong
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU)

There are some other binaries which should be noted:

- discipline/enterprise (institution)
- research/teaching (discipline)
- academic/administrative
- Others ? [see 'Is Higher Education Fair?' (Warren Piper, 1981)]

**The 1991 White Paper (Cm 1541)**

The 1991 White Paper heralded the end of the *binary line* as follows:

> 'This White Paper sets out the Government's policy on the future structure of higher education in the United Kingdom. In particular, it sets out proposals for abolishing the binary line, which currently divides the universities from other higher education institutions.' (para 1)

The White Paper also noted:

> 'The title of polytechnic has never been widely understood. The British academic world realises that the polytechnics of higher education institutions achieving the same academic standards and giving the same quality of education as most universities. Many able school leavers and their parents still tend, however, to regard the title as a reason for making them a second choice to a university and seeking a place in higher education. In their international contacts, polytechnics still find that they have to explain that they are not further education or sixth form or technical colleges.' (para 90)

It is worth noting that the White Paper refers to the 'binary line' and not to a 'binary policy'. It is also worth noting that this White Paper sets out a new framework for *quality*: quality control; quality audit; quality assessment.

Early in the 1980s, the Leverhulme Trust made a grant to the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) to carry out a programme of study into the future of higher education. 'The Structure and Governance of Higher Education' (1983) was the ninth publication of this programme of study and provides very useful insights into the binary policy. Of particular interest is chapter 9 in which Peter Scott (then Editor of the 'Times Higher') addressed the question 'Has the binary policy failed?'. He introduced the chapter as follows:

> 'So far as we have in Britain any policy for higher education it is the binary policy.'

The Robbins Report and Crosland's Policy speech at Woolwich Polytechnic are often referred to as introducing the binary line or policy. In Crosland's second binary policy speech (Lancaster, 1967) he started by pointing out that he had inherited a plural system which had existed for many years before Robbins. Peter Scott makes the following points:

> 'The effective question has always been not whether a binary line should be drawn but where it should be drawn.' (p167)
>
> 'The binary policy is not the same thing as the polytechnic policy.' (p168)
>
> 'The most accurate formula therefore is to talk of a binary policy within a plural system.' (p170)

These are crucial considerations and I will return later to note Peter Scott's discussion of the objectives of the UK binary policy. In this regard we should compare and contrast the binary policy in Hong Kong.

Lord Crowther Hunt chaired the Leverhulme seminar; in the Foreword, he noted 'Of primary importance is our proposal to deal with the obvious failure of the departments of education under successive governments to work out the positive and comprehensive policies for higher education.' In 1990, Bligh discussed how the system developed and noted that, 'The history of higher education since 1964 has been a story of the government trying to reduce its financial commitment and increase its control'.

Bligh also considered (as did many other commentators) that Crosland established the 'binary system' in which 'there are independent universities on the one hand and a range of institutions under some form of government control on the other'. It is certainly true that, with the establishment of CNAA in 1964, there was external control of validation for degrees offered by the polytechnics whereas the universities continued the traditional practice of being self-validating/self-accrediting.

In his chapter 3 on 'Policy Making and Accountability', Crowther Hunt refers to the 1975 OECD report for England and Wales which pointed out:

> 'There appears in the even split in higher education between the university and the polytechnic sectors more of elegance and formal parity than of rational estimation of social demand or of long-term projections for highly qualified personnel in the States, the economy and society.' (p54)

At this point, with reference to both UK and Hong Kong, it must be noted and emphasised that so-called manpower planning is notoriously inaccurate. (Refer EMB, 1991; EMB, 1994)

It should also be noted that control is at the heart of discussion of matters of higher education policy. In this regard, it was 18 months after Crosland's Woolwich speech (27 April 1965) that Crosland requested a meeting with the CVCP to discuss the meaning of the binary policy.

In the meantime, the UGC had become more active (a staff of 22 in 1953 rising to 112 by 1968). In 1968, for the first time, the UGC sent a Memorandum of General Guidance to each university along with its individual letter announcing the Quinquennial Recurrent Grant (p93). The 'guidance' not only referred to student numbers but also to subject areas in which the UGC was taking a particular interest. Berdahl (1983) notes a 'remarkably candid address' to the CVCP in November 1980, by Dr Edward Parkes, chairman of the UGC, which spelled out selectivity, 'we want everyone to be good at some things, but we want you to concentrate on your strengths ...'(p97)

In his chapter 6 on the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), Pratt (1983) noted the guiding principle behind the Robbin's committee's recommendations as that of 'equal academic awards for equal performance' irrespective of whether the degree was taken in a polytechnic or a university.

**Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA)**

Pratt notes that when the Council was established in 1964 after the Robbins Report it was simply to replace the National Council for Technology Awards which had until then awarded the diploma of technology to successful students in the colleges of advanced technology (CATs) and other leading technical colleges.

The government did not accept all of the recommendations of the Robbins committee. While 30 or so polytechnics were established, and the CATs became universities, no new universities were established. CNAA was given a powerful purpose as the main validating body for the polytechnics but this was not a function foreseen by the Robbins committee and Lord Robbins 'was outspoken in his resentment of what he called this perversion of it'. CNAA was clearly used as the main instrument of the binary policy.

Scott identifies four main objectives of the binary policy:

- The first objective was to prevent the total domination of higher education system by the universities. (p170)
- The second objective was to encourage the development of vocational or 'relevant' courses within higher education, a task which it was felt the universities were not adequate to undertake or alternatively with which they should not be expected to bother. (p171)

[Crosland admitted that he regretted parts of his Woolwich speech - cf 'the Politics of Education'.]

- The third objective (p175) was that the polytechnics and colleges were intended to be comprehensive institutions offering not only full time degree courses but also (and perhaps more so) full time sub-degree and part time degree and sub-degree courses.
- The fourth objective was to keep a substantial part of higher education 'under social control and directly responsive to social needs'. (Crosland/Woolwich)

Scott also suggests a fifth objective related to 'the potential capacity of polytechnics and other non-university colleges to attract students from a less restrictive social constituency than the universities'.

## Some Concluding Comments

In 'The Future for Higher Education' (1983) Ramsden discusses 'Student Experience of Learning' and compares and contrasts polytechnic students with university students. He suggests the conclusion that polytechnic teaching is better and notes some evidence that 'student learning in the polytechnics is of a higher quality than in the universities'.

The discussion of Peter Scott's paper (1983) indicates that most people at the Leverhulme seminar were in favour of removing the binary line but were unable to generate positive ideas for a new structure. Ten years later the binary line has not been removed but has been shifted to enable all polytechnics and central institutions (Scotland) to become universities while other non-university institutions may award degrees which can be validated by universities.

In Hong Kong, it is possible to identify official attitudes in the lack of reference to higher *vocational* education and to the higher diploma as the highest vocational qualification offered in Hong Kong. In my submission of proposals in response to the Governor's address (7 October 1992) I pointed out that 'there is no mention of vocational education or of the highest vocational qualification, the higher diploma, in any of your proposals for the future of Hong Kong. (I noted that teacher education is a particular form of vocational education.) As examples of 'neglect', I noted the following:

* In the Government's year book 'Hong Kong 1992', the chapter on 'education' mentioned higher diploma only once but there were many references to degree and degree courses.

* Another example is the chapter on education in 'The Other Hong Kong Report 1992'. The word 'vocational' (in quotes as shown) appears twice only: once with reference to Hong Kong University, and once with reference to Chinese University! Not once is there a reference to the Vocational Training Council, the Polytechnics or, indeed, the higher diploma.

In November 1993, the UPGC submitted an Interim Report 'Higher Education 1991-2001' (UPGC, 1993) to the Government, which was then released for public consultation to the public, on 4 March 1994. Again it would seem that official thinking equates higher education with degree education only. There was minimal reference to vocational education despite a retention rate of about 7% (no official target unlike degree education).

Since Hong Kong University was established there has always been a binary line in Hong Kong. During recent years the binary line has been shifted and it may be argued that the plurality of the higher education system is stronger than it has ever been. By the end of 1994 it is expected that legislation will have been approved for the three new universities: City University of Hong Kong, Baptist University of Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The two former polytechnics will retain their substantial sub-degree programmes; Baptist will have completed the conversion of Honours Diplomas to Honours Degrees.

**Sub-degree Higher Education**

The position of sub-degree work in higher education in Hong Kong is noted as follows:

1. "Honours Degree" is a qualification that a person gets upon successful completion of 3-year studies of a recognised curriculum; with similar requirements for the higher diploma, "sub-degree" is a qualification that is lower than a degree.

2. "Higher Diploma"(HD) is the highest level of undergraduate vocational qualification in Hong Kong and represents completion of a 3-year full-time programme of vocational education designed to develop students with attitudes, knowledge and skills required for employment in a wide range of occupations.

3. As indicated in 'Manpower Outlook in the 1990s' (EMB,1991) the government had misinterpreted HD as a qualification that could be attained after 2 years of studies subsequent to Form 6 studies. The inaccurate definition of HD by the government revealed imperfect understanding of the qualification because HD should be correctly depicted as a qualification that can be attained upon completion of 3 years of studies subsequent to the attainment of HKCEE qualification (Form 5).

4. In the context of official attitudes in Hong Kong, as noted previously, there has been a lack of reference to higher vocational education and to the HD as the highest vocational qualification offered in Hong Kong.

5. There has been no systematic coordination of the HD qualification in Hong Kong and there is no 'national' articulation with the degree. Internationally, the HD is comparable to the Higher National Diploma (HND) of BTEC and Level 4 of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) - generally considered equivalent to a pass degree. (Honours Degree is equivalent to Level 5 of NVQ.)

International and professional recognition of the standard of the CPHK HD can be demonstrated by:

6. In England there is ready acceptance of HD graduates with advanced standing to 3-year Honours Degree courses whereas a maximum of 50% exemption can be attained in Hong Kong in two programmes, only, of the OLI.

7. There is full exemption of HD graduates from the foundation part of a professional qualification and partial exemption from the vocational part.

   (a) HD graduates (HKCEE entry with 3-year full time studies) have, on average, a starting salary which is about 90% of that of bachelor degree graduates (HKALE entry with 3-year full-time studies).

(b) Promotion of HD education in Hong Kong should be undertaken in order to:

- correct biased assumptions and enhance public understanding that HD is the highest vocational qualification rather than merely "sub-degree";
- promote coordination among sister institutions.

8. Related marketing activities should be targeted to secondary school principals and teachers, potential applicants of HD programmes, e.g. Form 5 students and Technical Institute (VTC) diploma students; also to parents and employers.

9. In relation to the future of vocational education, statements made respectively in the Times Higher (30.10.92) and by Professor Kasem Suwanagul are relevant:

> "Lower level qualifications, including diplomas and certificates, have never achieved the same universal recognition (as degrees). Constantly changed, offered by a plethora of different bodies, their currency has been uncertain and public confidence shaky."
>
> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education, either at secondary or post-secondary level, can be the first step on the ladder to further education and or a rewarding and lucrative career."

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# LABOUR MARKET CONSIDERATIONS IN HONG KONG: DEVELOPMENTS AT THE HIGHER VOCATIONAL LEVEL

## Abstract

Labour market needs continue to change and the paper deals with policies and planning related to sub-degree programmes at the higher vocational (HV) level, leading to the Higher Diploma (HD). The HD is equivalent to the associate degree in North America and, in the UK, to the Higher National Diploma (HND) where it is generally accepted as pass degree equivalent. Since 1990 there have been far-reaching changes in the provision of the HD in Hong Kong and a review was initiated at the end of 1994. Two recent reports in Hong Kong are particularly significant: one dealing with manpower projections, the other with continuing education. It is vitally important that providers maintain quality while seeking to be more flexible.

## Background

On 1 July 1997, Hong Kong will become a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (PRC) for a period planned to be 50 years. The implications are already evident in labour market trends as Hong Kong shifts its manufacturing base into China and develops a flexible range of service industries. In turn, there are implications for the education and training needs for school-leavers, the workforce and industry; these will be addressed with reference to sub-degree programmes at the higher vocational (HV) level.

In Hong Kong, such sub-degree programmes lead to the qualification of the Higher Diploma (HD) which is currently offered by a wide range of institutions - City University of Hong Kong (CityU), the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, two Hong Kong Technical Colleges and the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong. Sub-degree programmes are part of a review of development of higher education in Hong Kong, initiated by the University Grants Committee[1] (UGC) in a letter (4 November 1994) to UPGC institutions. The review of sub-degree programmes will have particular reference to:

(a) provision of sub-degree programmes;
(b) demand for manpower at sub-degree level;
(c) quality assurance of sub-degree programmes;
(d) future development of sub-degree programmes; and
(e) feasibility of a credit unit system at sub-degree level.

For international comparison, the HD is equivalent to the associate degree in North America and to the Higher National Diploma (HND) in the UK. The higher vocational level is sub-degree and overlaps, as well as links, the degree level and the vocational/craft level. Further information regarding the standing and standard of the HD can be found in CHVS (1995)[2]. In the UK, the HND is validated by the Business and Technology Council (BTEC) and offered by a wide range of English universities. The HND (National Vocational Qualification - Level 4) is 'generally accepted as pass degree equivalent'. In passing, it may be noted that only England and Hong Kong offer a three year Honours Degree. In the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Honours Degree is a four year programme.

In 'Open Learning in Hong Kong' Murby[3] noted the publication of the second manpower projection[4] by the Education and Manpower Branch of the Government Secretariat. He commented that the report "augurs particularly well for continuing and community education providers" and proposed a tripartite scheme (within industry) involving: "government-led policy and formal recognition; employer specification and resourcing; and employee consultation and commitment".

At the higher vocational level at least, such a scheme (policy) should include the providers and, as appropriate, professional bodies. In Hong Kong, since different institutional jurisdictions have responsibilities for HV qualifications there should be a central quality assurance body for co-ordination and development[5]. This is supported by Cheng[6] writing in the Hong Kong Economic Journal, "vocational education was an area that had the greatest need for co-ordination ... the whole system and strategies called for review".

## Introduction

With the above background, the paper looks first at projections of manpower supply and requirements for Hong Kong up to 2001. Secondly, there is discussion of a recent review of continuing education commissioned by the UPGC. In both cases the focus will be on the higher vocational level of programmes and qualifications.

Some international considerations are then discussed with reference to interpretations of 'vocationalisation' and to the balance of degree graduates and HV graduates. For CityU, with a wide range of vocational and professional programmes, the paper sets out responses to UGC's timely review of sub-degree (i.e. higher vocational) education. Finally, there is discussion of the importance of the perceptions of stakeholders in the labour market -prospective students (and their relatives), employers, workforce and government; also reference to international recognition of HV qualifications for an increasingly international labour market.

## Manpower Supply and Requirements for 2001

In Hong Kong the Education and Manpower Branch (EMB) of the Government Secretariat published revised projections of manpower supply and requirements for 2001[7]. This is the third manpower projection report (the previous two being published in 1990 and 1991) and provides statistical projections of manpower supply and requirements by educational level, in 1996 and 2001, with 1991 as the base year. The stated purpose is to assess whether, under the existing and planned education provisions, the mix of manpower supply in terms of educational levels will be broadly in line with the future needs of the economy. The study also aimed to assess what kind of education the working population should possess to meet the needs of economic development. (Figure 1 gives definitions; Table 1 gives classifications of educational levels.)

**Figure 1: Definitions of Manpower Supply, Requirements and Projection**

Manpower 2001 Revisited: A Revised Projection of Manpower Supply and Requirements for 2001, Education and Manpower Branch, Government Secretariat, Hong Kong, June 1994.

Manpower Supply and Manpower Requirements

Manpower supply by educational level is the number of employed persons distributed by the level of education they have actually completed, whereas manpower requirements refer to the distribution of employed persons in accordance with the minimum level of education expected of them by the jobs they hold (and employers). The manpower balance and the educational level is the difference between the manpower supply and manpower requirement at that level. (para. 4)

Manpower Projection

The manpower projection consist of two parts: a manpower supply projection and the manpower requirements projection. The tasks involved in manpower requirements projection is to predict the distribution of the employed persons by the level of education which they should possess in order to meet the requirements of the jobs they hold (i.e. employer expectations). (Appendix B)

From the base year of 1991, manpower supply at both sub-degree and technician levels will increase by an average of 5.4% and 5.7% a year respectively. At sub-degree level, the projected negative balance of 1.4% (1996) is negligible in statistical terms; a small positive balance of 3.9% (2001) is estimated. Both indicate that the manpower supply at this level will broadly match the employment projections. Details for 2001 are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Comparison of projected manpower balance, 2001**

| Educational level | Supply | Requirements | Balance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | No. | As % of Requirements |
| Lower secondary or below | 1,410,800 | 1,361,000 | 49,800 | 3.7 |
| Upper secondary | 922,200 | 967,900 | -45,700 | -4.7 |
| Sixth form | 158,700 | 207,100 | -48,400 | -23.4 |
| Craft level | 33,300 | 28,200 | 5,100 | 18.1 |
| Technician level | 80,100 | 76,900 | 3,200 | 4.2 |
| **Subdegree** | **180,200** | **173,400** | **6,800** | **3.9** |
| First degree and above | 320,800 | 291,600 | 29,200 | 10.0 |
| *First degree* | *251,000* | *254,400* | *-3,400* | *-1.3* |
| *Postgraduate* | *69,800* | *37,200* | *32,600* | *87.6* |
| All levels | 3,106,100 | 3,106,100 | 0 | |

It would seem that there are no implications for changing current education and training policies. By source of supply, 67% of the new workers will be local graduates, 16% returned overseas graduates and 17% immigrants and returned immigrants.

For employment projections, employment in the service industries will grow rapidly while employment in the manufacturing industries will shrink - this continues a trend noted as starting in the mid-1980s. It has been estimated that as many as 3 million workers in South China are employed directly or indirectly by Hong Kong manufacturers as compared with a manufacturing work force of 565,000 in Hong Kong[8]. Employment in the construction sector will first increase during the construction of the new airport and related infrastructure projects but will then drop as these projects are completed. Employment demand will continue to shift in favour of high skilled workers.

**Continuing Education**

The UGC commissioned a review of continuing education (CE) and the report[8] deals with CE as education for people who have left the formal education system and started working. CE refers to both "a stage and a philosophy of education", ie that education should be lifelong and recurrent. There is particular relevance to labour market needs in that CE can be regarded as:

a) education for people in employment
b) at the post secondary level
c) investment in human capital which is work related rather than community or leisure-related.

As such CE is a vitally important part of the response of higher education to meet market needs and contribute, increasingly, to the economic restructuring of Hong Kong.

Chung et al[8] note that there are strong economic justifications for investing in continuing education - for knowledge and skills to be updated or changed to sustain adults during their working lives. Compared with school leavers or even graduates, working adults can identify readily the continuing (professional) education requirements to keep up with the demands of a changing world. These considerations are important for a small country/economy such as Hong Kong which must compete internationally and be adaptable to maintain competitiveness.

As noted previously, the UGC is carrying out a review of higher education (HE) in Hong Kong and this will definitely be related to Government's perceptions of labour market needs. Accordingly the review includes continuing education and there is little doubt that the conclusions will be considered carefully. The conclusions include:

- The market for part-time generic continuing education is saturated. (For example, there are over 40 MBA programmes on offer in Hong Kong.)
- Continuing education is playing a useful role in the economic restructuring of Hong Kong.
- Future expansion opportunities (for CE) lie in the market for part-time professional education.
- HE providers have demonstrated impressive adaptability and this argues against anything more than a minimal degree of intervention by government or UPGC.

The CE report makes no reference to social development although a particular occupational category for which numbers are expected (planned?) to increase is the 'social worker'[7] - this will be referred to later. The CE report comments on the lack of success of manpower planning in "economies which rely on planning, let alone free market economies".

> "Its track record in matching supply and demand for skills in the labour market has been so poor that international organisations such as World Bank and UNESCO which commissioned manpower studies in numerous developing countries in the 1960's and 1970's, has since moved away from this approach."[8]

## Some International Commentaries on Vocational Education

The purpose of this brief section present a sample of commentaries which link vocational higher education with manpower planning and market considerations. Since Hong Kong's systems of higher education are so closely linked to English systems, there is particular relevance in the references to the UK. In general, these international trends are indicative of a growing awareness of the neglected importance of higher vocational education and the need to introduce or develop more effective national planning strategies and delivery systems.

In a discussion on meeting manpower requirements, Benn and Fieldhouse[9] referred to reports from the UK Department of Education and Science (DES) and noted that the Government had stated that "a major determinant for the planning of higher education must be the demands for a highly qualified manpower and not student demand alone". The 1991 White Paper "Higher Education: A New Framework" reinforced the manpower role (policy) for higher education by promising "continuing education from the age of 5 through education and throughout working life". This clearly links with the review of continuing education in Hong Kong[8]. The UK Government has also continued to develop the National Qualifications Framework to include professional and postgraduate levels as well as vocational levels.

Halliday[10] offers an intriguing comparison with developments in the People's Republic of China, claiming that higher education has become more vocational, not in direct response to economic demands, but as an outcome of a political agenda. In terms of planning, "vocationalisation" of British higher education is "ideological" in that it is a means of increasing central government control, rather than simply a "natural" development of economic policy. This does not seem consistent with the information available; in Hong Kong the 'political' policy is definitely that of planning for economic development.

Pritchard[11] provides another reference to ideology in British higher education and categorises the United Kingdom at present, as a "State-Managed capitalist economy with a developed welfare system". Pritchard argues that the Government should publicly admit the need for state planning, ie of moving from a "pure" free market concept to that of the "managed" market. In Hong Kong the managed market for higher education does involve Government intervention and planning. It is hoped that the UGC Review (on behalf of Government) will result in a flexible partnership with HE providers for constructive and adaptive responses to market needs.

Elsewhere in Europe, Zeleni[12] discusses the organic growth of the higher education system arising from attempts to respond to the needs of a restructured labour market after the overthrow of Communism. He argues the case for including vocational higher education programme in any new legislation for higher education for the future development of the Czech republic - previous legislation having been enacted by the former Czechoslovakia. This is consistent with what has been observed as a basis for the relative success of vocational education in Germany and would certainly benefit other developing and developed economies.

Cheung[13] has referred to China's strategy to cope with rapid economic development through higher vocational and technical education, with the "ideal ratio" of 1:1:5 for graduates - university to higher vocational to ordinary vocational. This corresponds to a similar estimate in New Zealand of a ratio of 1:1 for technologists to technicians in engineering, and 1:1.25 for scientists: technicians generally (technicians being qualified at the higher vocational level). In their review paper Imrie, McCallion, and Thomas[14] considered a project growth rate of 3% for research and development and estimated that a 2.5 fold increase in qualified technicians would be required by the year 2000 (from about 900 in 1983).

Also in New Zealand the Beattie Report[15] identified "just two major obstacles" to NZ doubling its GDP per capita over the next 10-15 years. One was R&D performance, the other was "NZ's failure to produce sufficient numbers of technically literate and numerate people at all levels for the new industries needed".

While the latter conclusion is certainly addressed for Hong Kong in the EMB Report[7], considerations of R&D performance are possibly only implicit at best. In November 1994, Hong Kong doubled the number of universities and R&D is certainly at the top of the agenda for these six HE institutions! The UGC is providing substantial public funds but there is little evidence of planning or strategy for R&D let alone the manpower implications.

## City University and the UGC Review of Sub-Degree Higher Education

The UGC asked City University to consider issues in respect of the development of higher education in Hong Kong, with particular reference to the following:

(a) provision of sub-degree programmes;
(b) demand for manpower at sub-degree level;
(c) quality assurance of sub-degree programmes;
(d) future development of sub-degree programmes; and
(e) feasibility of a credit unit system at sub-degree level.

### Provision of Sub-degree Programmes

In the late 1980s, the Government decided to expand first degree places with a target of 18% of the age cohort (14,500 FTE students) for first year, first degree (FYFD) places in 1996. This meant that profile of the two polytechnics (Hong Kong Polytechnic and City Polytechnic) changed from 65% degree places and 35% sub-degree places to 35% and 65% respectively; and the establishment of two new technical Colleges offering HD programmes. In the then City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, and as a result of the anticipated change of applicant profile for sub-degree courses, a College of Higher Vocational Studies was established in January 1991 to take over the responsibilities of provision of sub-degree courses. In contrast to the target for FYFD places, no overall target was set for sub-degree places in Hong Kong.

The establishment of the College aimed

(a) to offer programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers, as well as the Hong Kong community; and

(b) to enable a better focus on vocational education through a coordinated approach in the delivery of sub-degree programmes.

In 1995, the College has twelve higher diploma (HD) courses and one diploma course. Courses are now well established, internationally recognised, and attract the greatest number of first choice applications in Hong Kong. Within the requirements of UGC (Government planning), intake quotas of courses can be adjusted, more options in various specialized areas can be built into existing courses, and new courses and qualifications may be introduced

(a) to meet the required increase in the sub-degree student intake from 1994-95, of 286 FTEs for 1995-96 and 350 FTEs for 1996-97 (when City University of Hong Kong reaches full size - 13,050 FTE students);

(b) to respond to industry and community need for manpower in different areas; and

(c) to provide more choices of vocational training for students.

For illustration, Table 2 gives a comparison of sub-degree student numbers of the last year of the current and next triennium, at City University.

**Table 2: Sub-degree student numbers for the last year of the 1992-95 and 1995-98 trienniums, at City University of Hong Kong.**

| **Current triennium: 1994-95** | | **Next triennium: 1997-98 (estimated)** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Full-time | Part-time | Full-time | Part-time |
| 3,264 | 2,040 | 3,852 | 2,335 |
| TOTAL : 5,304 | | TOTAL : 6,187 | |

## Demand for Manpower at Sub-Degree Level

There will be an increasing demand from employers for skills at the higher vocational level as part of continuing professional development for employees. This is in accordance with the principal findings of the UPGC's commissioned report 'An Economic Analysis of Continuing Education : Costs, Benefits, Trends and Issues'[8]. Particularly for programmes leading to qualifications, CityU is well placed to provide a variety of vocational programmes in part-time mode at diploma and higher diploma level. Other possibilities include introducing a new sub-degree qualification such as the Advanced Diploma (part-time) tailored to meet the needs of traditional industries which are experiencing technological change, for example the building industry.

Actual examples include the introduction, in 1993, of a new Higher Diploma in Banking & Financial Services (HD BFS) to meet the needs of an evidently important industry in Hong Kong. The programme was introduced in both full-time and part-time modes; the latter being innovative in that it was designed to be a three year programme (all others having been four years) to meet the needs of the market (students and employers). The HD BFS was introduced after extensive consultation with industry and is unique in Hong Kong. In fact, BFS is not one of the 76 occupational categories specified in the Government's report on manpower supply and requirements[7].

Another example relates to the reference made earlier to the importance of social as well as economic development and 'social workers' is one of the 76 occupational categories. The EMB Report indicates a demand for social workers with a growth from 4113 (1991) to 6112 (1996) to 7287 (2001) - 1% of the total demand. For the 1993-94 intake the College, without additional resources, adjusted the sub-degree intake from 100 to 185 student intake for the two-year Diploma in Social Work programme (full-time).

## Quality Assurance of Sub-Degree Programmes

Quality assurance procedures are well established for sub-degree programmes at CityU[16]. In an international context, an offer of accreditation for ten HD programmes by the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) of UK was received based on an assessment carried out by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN), in May 1994. If the related agreement proposed by UNN is approved, on fulfilling the Common Skills assessment required by BTEC for all HNDs, HD graduates would be eligible for a separate BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) awarded by UNN. This would be organised on a cost recovery basis with students opting to register at the beginning of the second year (FT).

## Future Development of Sub-Degree Programmes

It is envisaged that an important development will be part-time programmes to meet employer requirements for continuing professional development to 'add value' to their staff. These programmes will be on a self-financing basis.

Another important development is the reduction of the duration of the diploma-entry, part-time mode of the HD from four to three years. This is already in place for two HD programmes and part of the revalidation of a third. A particularly important development could be franchise opportunities for joint ventures with organisations in China but, despite a proposal in 1993, this is not yet CityU policy.

Finally, a fundamental development which would require policy and coordination would be the introduction of a credit unit system for all sub-degree programmes in Hong Kong.

## Feasibility of a Credit Unit System at Sub-Degree Level

Not only is this feasible but it would be very worthwhile in terms of flexibility for matters (self-evident in the USA) such as:

(a) enabling students to change modes of study to meet changing circumstances;
(b) keeping programmes up to date with new or updated modules;

(c) relaxing time constraints for course completion;
(d) improving recognition of prior work/study;
(e) enabling the development of cooperative education, ie the integration of work place learning and university learning (an example is the Diploma in Social Work mentioned previously).

The feasibility would require systemic coordination of all diploma and higher diploma programmes offered by CityU, HK Polytechnic University, the HK Technical Colleges and the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong. Development of a vocational qualifications framework would be appropriate. A sub-degree credit unit system could then be the basis for articulation with a similar development for degree programmes. It is hoped that all of these considerations will be outcomes of the UPGC's review of higher education.

## Concluding Comments

In general, as noted by Imrie[17], industry needs educated and trained personnel to ensure continuing development and productivity. Industry can be considered as an "employment system" with staffing inputs and outputs, and staffing changes (eg, levels and categories of occupation within the industry. The system is dynamic ie, the needs change with time. In a technical sense this kind of system requires "adaptive control" which, by responding to information obtained from monitored performance, makes adjustments to ensure optimum effectiveness.

For a labour market system, there are linkages which may need development to ensure appropriate (ie timely) identification of needs so that response is effective - demand is met in time to avoid deterioration in performance of the system.

The provision of training can itself be optimised by providing appropriate on-the-job and off-the-job programmes and opportunities. Although progress is being made in a number of countries, there is a still a growing need for formal recognition of industry-based training to complement institution-based training for vocational qualifications, and for the respective programmes to be coordinated. Government, HE providers, employers and professional bodies all have a role to play in ensuring that policy and procedures are developed - with an awareness of the international implications.

In Hong Kong, the Continuing Education Report[8] noted that the labour market is very flexible but, due to the time lag in the educational processes, changes to the supply of new graduates do not provide an immediate response to changes in labour market needs. "In this regard continuing education has a significant role to play in helping to restore any mismatch between supply and demand in the short run." The authors also noted that the Hong Kong HE institutions have established continuing education units and that these are "much more market-oriented than the regular academic departments".

This is not surprising since this is an important part of their mission. In 1991, City Polytechnic established a Centre for Continuing Education which has been particularly successful in the 'market place' in regard to programmes which increasingly target the professional/vocational needs of employers. As of 30 November 1994, City University has upgraded the Centre to the School for Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) with the expectation of considerable future expansion.

Issues related to employers have been discussed. Their advice and perceptions are strategically important for responding to and anticipating labour market needs - central to the Mission statement of CityU. The College of Higher Vocational Studies has been proactive in this regard. When established in 1991 (as a 'vocational' Faculty), the College introduced Course Advisory Committees (CACs) with strong representation from appropriate sectors of the community, and professional bodies. The CACs also play a vital role in regard to quality assurance.

However, more needs to be done and there are worthwhile models. For example, there is the UK report on employer satisfaction[18] which addresses three questions related to the issue of economic growth:

- To what extent should higher education address itself to the economic needs of society?
- Should higher education ensure it provides a steady supply of graduates to match the requirements of industry and commerce?
- Should the quality of higher education be assessed, even in part, on the basis of employer views?

In the context of this paper, the conclusions are 'YES' to the last two questions. For the first question, for another discussion, higher education and industry should address comprehensively the sustainable economic and social needs of society. As noted by Chan and Imrie[19], raising the status of vocational (non-graduate) education may be the most urgent task facing society if a skills gap is to be avoided - an issue discussed in 'Manpower Outlook in the 1990s'[4]. For example, as stated by the Minister of University Affairs, Thailand:

> "The challenge to vocational educators will be in convincing parents and youth that vocational education, either at the secondary or post-secondary level, can be the first step on the ladder to further education and/or a rewarding and lucrative career."[20]

And in the UK[21]:

> "Lower level qualifications including diplomas and certificates have never received the same universal recognition (as degrees). Constantly changed, offered by a plethora of different bodies, their currency has been uncertain and public confidence shaky."

And in Taiwan as noted by Boyd and Lee[22]:

> "It is sad that, even within as pragmatic a society as that of the Republic of China on Taiwan, that vocational education still bears the implication of 'less than worthy'. Especially within the middle-class and among the upper-class families, children are directed more into a traditional mode of education. In other words, all are for vocational and educational training as long as it does not involve their sons and daughters."

In many disciplines and in many countries both 'developed' and developing there is usually an over-supply of degree holders and a shortage of HND/HD vocationally qualified manpower. Manpower projections are potentially useful but planning must include strategies to address the issues of perceptions regarding the status of vocational qualifications.

Returning to satisfaction (used as a proxy for quality), not only should employers be asked their views in regard to the 'quality' of the graduates on first employment but so too should the graduates be asked about their perceptions of the programmes which prepared them for employment. The model here could be the Course Experience Questionnaire[23] organised nationally by the Graduate Careers Council of Australia.

Finally, quality must be assured for any of the programmes provided to meet the needs of the labour market in Hong Kong, or elsewhere. This a professional responsibility expected of higher education and calls for 'safe' validation and accreditation procedures in any system of higher education. There are international implications and the issues are being addressed by the International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA).

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# INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

## Synopsis

Is it desirable that there should be international recognition of vocational qualifications? Should there be a system (or systems) for such international recognition? This paper invites consideration of the issues and the implications.

One issue relates to the assumptions that each country (or nation state) does value vocational education and training (VET) and will have a national system of vocational qualifications. The national system, however, may not provide for the effective coordination of the standards and provision of the vocational qualifications; also the system may not be integrated within the national system of higher education, i.e. the VET programmes and qualifications are not articulated with degree or professional levels of higher education.

A second issue is that the quality of the national system will have implications for international recognition of the qualifications (and institutions) for the country and for the individual:

(a) for employment outside the country;
(b) for professional body membership (increasingly an influential consideration for validation of vocational programmes/qualifications);
(c) for further study - with holders of vocational qualifications seeking credit for degree and postgraduate study (Master's level).

A third issue is that quality assurance systems have been or are being developed by some countries to monitor and judge qualifications/institutions from other countries, which are acceptable for the above purposes. These issues will be discussed with reference to Hong Kong where, in 1995, the binary line has shifted with the transition of the only two polytechnics to university status, with both retaining the provision of sub-degree or vocational qualifications as a matter of national policy.

For international recognition of HVQs, experience of working with BTEC (Business & Technology Council, UK) will be described. As a result of a change of BTEC policy in 1991, BTEC no longer validates directly programmes/qualifications in other countries but authorises a UK institution to act on its behalf.

An arrangement for external accreditation of VET programmes/qualifications in Hong Kong, has been made by the Vocational Training Council with City and Guilds of London Institute (UK). BTEC, and City and Guilds, are thus providing services for international recognition of VET qualifications in UK, Europe, Asia and in Commonwealth countries related to the UK's National Vocational Qualifications Framework.

This paper concludes that it is desirable that there should be a system of international recognition of vocational qualifications. In this regard, IVETA could play a major leadership or catalytic role and recommendations are offered for discussion.

### *Introduction*

Over a period of about ten years, there has been a noticeable (even remarkable) growth of interest and initiative in the development of national policies for the rationalisation and recognition of vocational and professional qualifications, and their relationship to academic qualifications. In general terms this paper will consider higher vocational qualifications as diploma-level (or sub-degree); professional qualifications as requiring a degree together with specified experience and awarded by professional bodies.

The interested parties (roleplayers or stakeholders) include higher education, statutory and professional bodies, and government; and it is government which is setting and driving the agenda in different countries. Is it then self-evident that there should be systems for international recognition of vocational qualifications? It would seem so, at least in a European context, but is there a role for international organisations or international associations? Relevant work of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was reported at the annual IVETA Conference in Denver (Petrov, 1995); the World Association for Co-operative Education (WACE) has set out a vision statement and an international strategic plan; should IVETA seek to make a significant contribution to the international recognition of vocational qualifications?

Issues are addressed with reference to developments in European and other countries. Some specific comment is made about recent and current developments in Hong Kong.

### Issues

The first issue relates to the assumption that each country (or nation state) does or should value vocational education and training (VET). Countries as diverse as the Czech Republic, the Republic of South Africa, Scotland and Taiwan, are seeking to establish higher vocational education as an acceptable and important part of higher education - often interpreted solely in terms of degree education. In the past, if there have been national systems of vocational qualifications these have had the effect of maintaining separation from systems of academic and professional qualifications. This has changed significantly and there is now resolve and action to develop policies and frameworks to integrate and co-ordinate qualifications nationally and, in the case of Europe, internationally.

In England, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ), was set up in 1986 to develop the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) Framework - 'a new system of qualifications to meet the needs of industry'. NCVQ is an approval or accrediting body and awarding bodies such as City and Guilds, Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and the Business & Technology Education Council (BTEC) are developing their awards to meet NVQ criteria and thereby obtain NCVQ approval.

In Scotland there is a separate, complementary system with the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) acting as both an awarding and an approval body for SVQs - Scottish Vocational Qualifications. NVQs and SVQs are equivalent and recognised as such by the European Community. On the basis of this equivalence, for the purposes of this paper, reference will be made to NVQ Levels 4 and 5, representing higher (level) vocational qualifications. Definitions are (NCVQ, 1995):

**Level 4**

> Competence which involves the application of knowledge in a broad range of complex technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources is often present.

**Level 5**

> Competence which involves the application of a significant range of fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources feature strongly, as do personal accountabilities for analysis and diagnosis, design, planning, execution and evaluation.

Level 4 is generally accepted as pass degree equivalent; Level 5 would generally require an honours degree or postgraduate qualification together with experience and continuing professional development in the related occupational area. Essentially NVQs are qualifications about work and are based on standards developed by industry and commerce (NCVQ, 1994).

In January 1995, Australia introduced a unified qualifications system for the three education sectors - higher education, secondary education, technical and further education; and the previously varied 'system' of qualifications has been replaced by one certificate, awarded at four levels, a diploma and an advanced diploma. Universities will continue to issue diplomas and advanced diplomas along with degrees (Times Higher, 1995a). While this is broadly in line with the NVQ Framework, developments in New Zealand are related more to the SCOTVEC model, initiated when Mr Tom McCool, Chief Executive Officer of SCOTVEC, visited New Zealand in 1987.

The New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) will operate a qualifications framework with eight levels including degrees; degrees, like NVQ Levels 4 and 5, will not be unit based but based on national standards. As noted by Times Higher (1995a), 'Accreditation frameworks are going to be needed everywhere'.

This links to developments reported in the USA (Times Higher, 1995b). In 1993, the Department of Education initiated a reform of the accreditation system currently involving eight regional accrediting bodies and seven national higher education associations. The reform proposals include setting up a new national body with new national standards which would no longer be called 'commons standards' but 'threshold standards' i.e. minimum standards which could be developed to reflect local or regional needs. The important concept of threshold or minimum national standards is crucial but is not new. For example, it was articulated in a videotape prepared for the project 'Assessment of Student Performance' (Imrie and Hall, 1988) sponsored by the Authority for Advanced Vocational Awards, the then national accrediting and examining body for higher vocational qualifications in New Zealand.

In regard to accreditation, the opening and closing paragraphs of a paper by Millard (1983) are worth noting - written when he was President of the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation in the USA:

> "Accreditation does not determine institutional or programme quality. Educational quality is a characteristic of institutions or programmes, not of accrediting associations. ... while accreditation cannot create quality, it has or it should have a crucial role in determining whether an institution or programme has accepted and is carrying out its commitment to quality. It also provides incentives to encourage enhancement of quality."

> "Accreditation has come a long way from its activities in the first year of this century. The issue of quality will always be with us. If we are to strengthen quality in a period of fiscal stringency, variable enrolment, increased competition, and demands for increased accountability, accreditation must continue to evolve."

A second issue, therefore, is the quality of the *national* system and the implications for international recognition of qualifications including recognition of the accrediting and the awarding bodies. For the individual with a higher vocational qualification from one country there is growing awareness of international opportunities and interest in recognition of qualifications:

(a) for employment;
(b) for professional body membership;
(c) for further study at degree or postgraduate level.

Related to this is the third issue of quality assurance and assessment systems being developed in various countries which will contribute to international recognition of qualifications and, in turn, be used by countries to monitor and judge qualifications (and awarding bodies) from other countries. Some examples will be discussed.

**United Kingdom**

A commissioned report (Coopers & Lybrand, 1985) which had direct links to the setting up of the NCVQ in 1986, included a foreword by representatives of the commissioning bodies: John Cassels, Director General of the National Economic Development Office and Geoffrey Holland, Director of the Manpower Services Commission. The foreword included a clear international awareness:

> "The evidence is there ... comparisons between countries, and between companies within the UK, demonstrate the central importance of vocational education and training in the development, production and selling of high quality, competitive products and services."

Under 'Qualifications' was noted the conclusion, considered to be of critical importance:

> "that there should be the development of a clear structure of qualifications based on the achievement of set standards or competences".

Two awarding bodies in England have been mentioned: City and Guilds (of London Institute) and BTEC. In each case there have been significant international and marketing developments. For City and Guilds (C&G), the following information is taken from the International Handbook (C&G, 1993) and from the Policy Statement (C&G, 1994). This independent body, operating under Royal Charter, has established City and Guilds International as a company to provide services to all countries outside the UK. C&G services are currently provided in some 85 countries including Hong Kong where an agreement has been signed with the Vocational Training Council whereby registered students would be eligible for Certificates of Unit Credit.

C&G will develop international vocational qualifications based as closely as possible on NVQs, covering a range of professions and subjects and offered at basic skill level through to technician and diploma levels. It is worth noting that C&G has incorporated 'World Class Qualifications' as part of its logo.

BTEC became an independent body as recently as 1993 and is marketing itself nationally and internationally with particular reference to NVQ Level 4 (Higher National Diploma - HND) and Level 5. NVQs were awarded by BTEC in 1991 for the first time and the new NVQ at Level 5 in management studies was seen to be a major achievement (Sellars, 1994a). In a publicity leaflet (BTEC, 1994) it was noted:

- a BTEC HND is a nationally and internationally recognised qualification, just like a degree;
- 49% of BTEC HND graduates in summer 1992 went on to complete a degree in one or two years only.

In England, the HND (NVQ Level 4) is part of the national framework of qualifications and credit transfer is automatic. For the English three year honours degree, the HND is recognised as pass degree equivalent and students, generally, are admitted to the final year. However, in some areas such as engineering, professional bodies require two years of degree study.

### Engineering

As a link with Europe and with Hong Kong it is worth considering engineering as an example of vocational and professional qualifications requiring recognition among awarding, statutory and professional bodies - nationally as well as internationally.

Sellars (1994) noted that, in 1991, BTEC changed its name from Business & *Technician* Council to Business & *Technology* Council and 'Europe was responsible'.

> "Specifically, the professional bodies in engineering were negotiating with colleagues in Europe and managed to secure European Community-wide acceptance of the status of Incorporated Engineer (previously Technician Engineer). Achievers of the IE qualification, regardless of the professional body to which they belonged, could practice (sic) anywhere within the EC."

The Engineering Council (UK) defines engineering qualifications in three categories: Chartered Engineer, Incorporated Engineer and Engineering Technician. The term Technician Engineer was superseded by that of Incorporated Engineer by virtue of a supplemental Charter approved by the Privy Council in 1988 - also because of Europe.

In "Professional Engineering" (Greek, 1994), Professor J Picken, Chairman of the Institution of Mechanical Engineer's Academic Standards Committee which accredits engineering courses, expressed concern about the standard of certain degrees offered and what this means. "In Singapore, engineering degrees from around half of UK universities are deemed acceptable to the Singapore Board of Engineering, the other half are not. Now this may not seem very important, but it is a damning indictment of an educational system which was once considered one of the best."

**Europe**

There is not one body responsible for the recognition of vocational qualifications in Europe. Each of the Member States has its own National Co-ordinator responsible for the implementation of Directives. The following information is provided by the Qualifications and ITOs Branch of the Department of Employment, UK (QIB, 1995). QIB has responsibility for a number of European programmes including the Comparability of Vocational Qualifications in the EC, and the Second Diploma Directive on a general system for the recognition of professional qualifications.

The Second Diploma Directive (92/51/EEC) completes the system begun by Directive 89/48/EEC (First Diploma Directive). The First Diploma Directive is the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and was implemented in the UK in 1991. It deals with the recognition of qualifications awarded after at least 3 years of higher education. The Second Diploma Directive was agreed by the Council of Ministers on 18 June 1992 and was due to be implemented by 18 June 1994. However, due to the complexity of the Directive we are still working towards an effective implementation measure for the UK.

The Second Directive applies to all occupations which are regulated in any Member State of the Community and will require the bodies controlling entry to professions to recognise equivalent qualifications earned in other Member States. This Directive will extend the system and procedures for recognition to include: qualifications achieved after post-secondary courses of 1-3 years taken after qualifications which are needed to enter university, and equivalents including National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (NVQs/SVQs) levels 3 and 4; awards made on completion of a course following a minimum school-leaving age qualification; and professional experience.

Comparability of vocational training qualifications (EC, 1992) is a system that provides the necessary information on the comparability of vocational training qualifications so that the migrant worker can supply more information on his or her qualifications in order to find work in another Member State.

Legal recognition is required only for access to regulated professions, i.e. occupations which can only be entered by those who hold a diploma, certificate or other qualification from the National Training System, as stipulated by legal, regulatory or administrative provisions. The recognition of diplomas is therefore designed to certify the legal value of a qualification, whereas the system of comparability of qualifications is designed to provide information about the level and scope of vocational training qualifications.

In summary, the First Diploma Directive (December 1988) is aimed at the recognition of diplomas for professional purposes. The Second Diploma Directive (June 1992) is intended to complement the first and includes in the definition of 'diploma', qualifications accredited as NVQs (or SVQs) at Levels 3 and 4 of the UK National Framework of Vocational Qualifications. Note that Level 4 corresponds to the BTEC HND - equivalent to a pass degree. The Directives apply to 17 European countries.

## Hong Kong

Having indicated briefly developments in Europe for comparability of vocational training qualifications and for recognition/definition of diplomas in regard to the legal value of a qualification, this section sets out some developments and implications for Hong Kong. More detailed accounts of the development of higher vocational qualifications in Hong Kong can be found in CHVS (1995), Patel and Imrie (1994) and Imrie (1995a, 1995b).

There are three bodies which offer the Higher Diploma (HD) which is the highest vocational qualification and is at the sub-degree level. The University Grants Committee (UGC) is responsible for seven university institutions - two of which (City University of Hong Kong - CityU and Hong Kong Polytechnic University - PolyU) offer the HD. The Vocational Training Council (VTC) has two Hong Kong Technical Colleges (TCs) which offer the HD, and the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong (OLI) is the third body.

The TCs and OLI enrolled their first HD students in 1993 and, late in 1994, the UGC formally initiated a review of such sub-degree programmes as part of a more extensive review of higher education. The report is expected in November 1995. At this stage all of the providers are self-accrediting and there is no Hong Kong body which is responsible for a minimum or threshold standard for the HD in Hong Kong. Mention has already been made of the agreement between City and Guilds (C&G) and the VTC for registered students to be eligible for Certificates of Unit Credit. The OLI also operates a credit system to provide up to 80 credits (50%) for the HD graduate wishing to study for an honours degree.

Noting that only England and Hong Kong offer a three year, full-time honours degree, CityU HD graduates are widely accepted in English universities for entry into the final year of the honours degree. In terms of international recognition the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN), acting on behalf of BTEC, carried out an assessment of ten (of 12) HD programmes at CityU, in May 1994. The report confirmed that the HD was well above the minimum (national) standard of the HND (NVQ Level 4) 'generally considered equivalent to a pass degree'. UNN/BTEC proposed a memorandum of co-operation whereby registered HD students, on graduation and on satisfying the requirements of BTEC's Common Skills Assessment, would also be entitled to the award of HND by UNN. This proposal was declined.

International recognition of higher vocational qualifications is also influenced by professional bodies. For example, honours degrees in engineering awarded in England after one year of study to a CityU HD graduate with advanced standing, will not be accepted by the Engineering Council (UK). In November 1993, an Accreditation Panel of the British Computer Society (BCS) visited CityU. The BCS is the Chartered Engineering Institution for Information Systems Engineers. Eventually (30 November 1994) the Registrar wrote to advise that accreditation (Part 1) for Incorporated Engineer (IEng) had been granted for the HD in Computer Studies. Of particular interest, however, is the following statement:

> "The Committee considered the BSc(Hons) Computing Science, awarded by the University of Ulster. However, since the visit, the Committee has established that the Engineering Council will not endorse a recommendation for accreditation for CEng for a post-Higher Diploma course which is equivalent to less than two years full-time study; moreover the Committee was itself not convinced that an education appropriate for an engineer would be undergone by these students. The Committee therefore decided not to recommend accreditation for CEng for the BSc (Computing Science). I shall be writing formally to the University of Ulster."

The Council of the Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE) endorsed (8 December 1994) that 'for the purposes of the HKIE, it will only recognise accreditations carried out by its own Accreditation Board after 1.1.95'. In effect, for engineering qualifications, the HKIE is linked internationally with other engineering professional bodies and is the only body which determines minimum standards for Hong Kong. The following definitions are offered in the appendix of the Professional Accreditation Handbook (HKIE, November 1994).

Academic Accreditation

Any evaluation or assessment to determine whether the academic standards of an institution of higher education are comparable with internationally recognised standards. It includes course validation, course revalidation, institutional review and institutional accreditation.

Professional Accreditation

Evaluation and comparison of the academic standards of a degree or sub-degree and consideration of the appropriateness of the education component of that degree or sub-degree for professional practice.

Internationally, there are overseas universities which offer programmes in Hong Kong that recognise higher vocational qualifications and with conversion courses designed for HD entry. For example, the earlier quote from the BCS Registrar referred to the BSc(Hons) Computing Science awarded by the University of Ulster. Ulster offers this degree to graduates with HD in Computer Studies and the part-time programme can be completed in two years. As noted, the students obtain an academic qualification which, however, is not recognised for a professional qualification.

In this regard it is relevant to note that, in Hong Kong, the education (overseas tertiary institutions - OTIs) (exemption) order came into operation on 15 February 1994. The press release noted that 'the objective would be to ensure that the standards of the courses offered by OTIs in Hong Kong were recognised by the OTIs themselves as well as by the accrediting authorities in their countries of origin'. The legislation noted the following definitions.

> 'Recognised academically' means being recognised as having attained the academic standard required for a sub-degree, a degree or postgraduate course;
>
> 'Recognised professionally' means being recognised as having attained the academic standard required by a professional body.

The press release also noted that the legislation will aim to ensure that the standards of courses delivered in Hong Kong would be maintained at levels comparable to those achieved on-campus in the institutions overseas.

Here is an example of the UK National Qualifications Framework establishing a presence in Hong Kong with Oxford University as the 'OTI'. The Overseas Chinese Daily News (OCD News, 1994) reported that the Management Development Centre of Hong Kong (MDC) 'has joined hands' with Oxford University in launching the 'Management Development Qualifications' (MDQ); also that the NVQ is divided into 5 levels; and for the subject of management, level 3 caters for supervisors, level 4 for managers and level 5 for senior executives.

In just over two years, Hong Kong will become a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China and it is likely that there will be some convergence of such matters as academic and professional accreditation. Reaction from professional bodies in Hong Kong, was noted (Lau, 1994) when the culture sub-group of the Preliminary Working Committee (China) suggested that Hong Kong should recognise degrees awarded by all the 516 mainland universities approved by the Chinese State Council Academic Bureau. Under a scheme administered by the Education and Manpower Branch (Hong Kong), graduates of 35 top Chinese universities - considered to be of the highest standard by the Chinese State Education Commission - are allowed to apply to come to work in Hong Kong.

For degree recognition purposes, arrangements are being made for the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA) to undertake this responsibility. HKCAA previously accredited degree programmes in the polytechnics which became self-accrediting in 1993, and universities in 1994. Accordingly HKCAA has considerable experience in this regard and would be the appropriate body to develop an appropriate qualifications framework for Hong Kong post-1997.

Finally, for China, Cheung (1994) suggests that 'a comprehensive system of validation and moderation by local or overseas external bodies can help to establish and maintain standards of curricula offered which may help to gain national or international professional recognition of graduate qualifications'.

## Vision

In this paper the discussion of international recognition of (higher) vocational qualifications has noted the influence and roles of a range of bodies: government, statutory, professional and higher education. In the UK 'A Vision for Higher Level Vocational Qualifications' (ED, 1995) sets out the views of a Higher Levels Strategy Group formed to respond to the Government's call to complete the NVQ/SVQ framework of vocational qualifications at Levels 4 and 5. The deadline for comment is 31 May 1995; there is no doubt that the outcomes will have European and wider, international implications. For example, it was reported (Times Higher, 1995c) that the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) is seeking to export its system i.e. the NVQ Framework. 'Several Arab states are offering NVQs, and Mexico is this week expected to establish its own vocational council after nearly two years of consultation with the NCVQ."

It is worth noting the following general principles on which the Vision is based:

- Vocational qualifications at the higher levels will also be based on national standards, but their nature and definition may in many instances be different from those of lower level qualifications.
- The unit structure of vocational qualifications should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the range of career routes in occupations.
- The vision offers a comprehensive and high quality system of vocational qualifications built on common structures and related directly to the challenges of working life.
- A cohesive set of qualifications derived through a public process involving clearly defined partnerships and resulting in agreed occupational standards could benefit existing structures and increase public confidence and accountability in the 'professions'.

At this point there has been no mention of the possible influence and roles of international associations. For one such body, the World Association for Co-operative Education (WACE), the Council has recently published its own Vision/Mission/Strategy. The Vision Statement is:

> WACE will facilitate world-wide development of partnerships between the education and the public and private sectors for purposes of human resources development.
>
> By the year 2000, WACE will be viewed as a highly-valued leader in enhancing work-integrated learning world-wide.

**IVETA**

The conclusion of this paper is that it *is* self-evident that there should be a system for international recognition of vocational qualifications. While this might be obvious the implications are profound and far-reaching. A particular consideration is the role that IVETA might have in addressing such implications and in seeking to work co-operatively with other bodies - such as those mentioned in this paper.

Clearly the policies represented by the European Community Directives will have far-reaching effects as the EC network expands. As part of the EC, the UK NVQ Framework will also have a strong influence internationally through the network of Commonwealth countries (e.g. New Zealand).

To an extent, the USA and Canada represent major areas of activity for the co-op model of vocational and professional higher education and WACE works in association with a range of co-op organisations. Both countries have well-established credit systems linking vocational, sub-degree qualifications with degree programmes - without the need for national vocational qualification frameworks as discussed in this paper.

IVETA, however, with its affiliation to the American Vocational Association (AVA), and its international representation could consider the following initiatives:

- develop a vision, mission and strategy with the aim of participating in the development of international recognition of vocational qualifications; by
- working with the AVA to raise awareness of UK, European and international developments;
- working with NCVQ, BTEC, SCOTVEC, British Council and the ILO to raise awareness of opportunities for networks to develop - by strengthening and focusing the IVET Journal, and by co-sponsoring of regional conferences on international recognition of vocational qualifications;
- working with international/professional bodies for similar purposes and, in association with international funding bodies such as the World Bank, seeking to develop national projects as part of an international framework;
- working with associations such as WACE and with international conferences such as 'Assessing Quality in Higher Education' to develop synergies and greater effectiveness;
- using the internet creatively to monitor national developments and, in turn, to inform potential opportunities for further development.

As an agent for change, IVETA could and should seek to work with other bodies as a demonstration of capability (competent, co-operative, creative and cope-able) so that much more recognition and support is given to higher vocational education - so long neglected by the elitism of degree-only higher education.

Using engineering, again, as a continuing example, it was only in 1992 that Baroness Platt of Writtle wrote, under the heading 'It's the qualification that matters' (Platt, 1992):

> "We need a national campaign to upgrade the status of technicians. We need to promote not only technician careers in themselves, but also the opportunities that BTEC's qualifications offer people - as years go by and having been motivated by success - for them to consider degrees. The Privy Council has started that ball rolling for the engineering profession by giving its blessing to the title incorporated engineer - which has lately been reinforced by a European directive. The Engineering Council is now positively encouraging people to register for the title, and employers can help by demanding that their employees *do* register with the Council, not only as incorporated engineers but also as engineering technicians."

Vocational qualifications do matter and there should be an international, as well as a European, campaign to upgrade their status. I hope that IVETA'95 will support this request to the Association to address the issues and the opportunities, to consult the membership and to report back at the annual meeting in Denver at the end of the year.

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# INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION WITH HIGHER VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS: A CASE STUDY

## Abstract

The paper discusses an attempt to develop a Memorandum of Co-operation between the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN) on behalf of the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), in England, and the College of Higher Vocational Studies on behalf of City University of Hong Kong (CityU). Discussions started in July 1993 and concluded in May 1995.

Formerly Newcastle Polytechnic, UNN became a university in September 1992 and offers a wide range of Higher National Diploma (HND) programmes as well as degree and postgraduate qualifications. With a similar profile and range of qualifications, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong became a university in November, 1994, and offers twelve Higher Diploma (HD) and one Diploma programmes. The HND (England) and the HD (Hong Kong) are higher vocational qualifications and are equivalent in standard to the North American associate degree. In England the HND is equivalent to a pass degree; internationally only England and Hong Kong offer a three year honours degree.

Incorporating what is described as a BTEC franchise agreement, the Memorandum represented an offer of accreditation for ten HD programmes by the Business & Technology Education Council (BTEC), based on an assessment carried out by UNN, in May 1994. As part of the agreement, HD graduates from CityU would be eligible for a separate BTEC Higher National Diploma awarded by UNN. While requiring appropriate quality assurance arrangements, the Memorandum provided fully for the autonomy of CityU in regard to the Higher Diploma. The conditions for the award included payment of the BTEC registration fee and fulfilment of the Common Skills assessment required by BTEC for all HNDs. All arrangements would be on a cost recovery basis with students opting to register at the beginning of the second year of the three year, full-time programme, or at the commencement of the part-time programme.

This study discusses issues in terms of implications for students/graduates, staff and CityU. There is considerable cost-benefit for the students but there are assessment reporting requirements which mean additional work for staff and students. This is offset against revenue and less tangible benefits potentially available from international co-operation. This example points to the need to develop world-wide systems for recognition of higher vocational qualifications which represent capability outcomes essential for social and economic development, particularly in developing countries.

## Introduction

This paper discusses an attempt to develop co-operation with higher vocational qualifications between two new universities which were formerly polytechnics: City University of Hong Kong (CityU) and the University of Northumbria at Newcastle (UNN) in England. The study may be of interest because of a number of considerations that are generalisable although context will clearly affect similar co-operation between other institutions internationally.

The first consideration is the current role of the Business & Technology Education Council (BTEC) which changed its international policy in 1990 and now works through universities in England (and Wales) in its relationships with higher education institutions overseas. The second consideration is the comparability of higher vocational qualification in terms of the National Qualifications Framework within which BTEC now operates[1]. A third consideration relates to the commitment of academic staff to establishing co-operation.

## Context

CityU was first established as City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK) on 1 January 1984 and, in ten years, has grown at an unprecedented rate to become, on 25 November 1991, the second largest university in Hong Kong with about 11,400 FTE students comprising 9,300 FT and 5,900 PT students studying for a wide range of qualifications from diploma to PhD[2]. The planned size of 13,050 FTE students will be reached in 1997-98.

During the period 1 January 1991 to 1 January 1995 there was considerable growth and change for CPHK/CityU and also change in the provision of higher vocational education in Hong Kong. Having introduced a Faculty structure in 1990, on 1 January 1994 CPHK established a vocational Faculty in the form of the College of Higher Vocational Studies to manage one Diploma programme and a range of Higher Diploma (HD) programmes which had previously been the responsibility of Faculty departments teaching degree programmes. The College currently offers one Diploma programme and 12 HD programmes with an enrolment of about 4,000 FTE students or 37% of the total enrolment of CityU[3].

In effect, the establishment of the College to manage diploma or sub-degree higher vocational programmes, was an outcome of Government policy (announced in October 1989) 'to undertake a massive expansion' of first degree education which would approximately double the participation rate to reach 18% by 1994-95. Both CPHK and Hong Kong Polytechnic (subsequently to become Hong Kong Polytechnic University at the same time as CityU) were asked to switch from 65% sub-degree places to 35%, with the 'surplus' places to be provided by two new technical colleges.

On 25 November 1994, the two polytechnics and Baptist College became universities making a total of six universities and Lingnan College under the management of the University & Polytechnic Grants Committee (UPGC) which became the University Grants Committee (UGC) on 26 November 1994.

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) is a separate jurisdiction and established the new Hong Kong Technical Colleges (Chai Wan and Tsing Yi) in time to enrol their students for 1993-94 for a range of HD programmes. In the same year the independent Open Learning Institute (OLI) of Hong Kong also started offering HD programmes part-time.

The final consideration for this context is that the UGC (4 November 1994) continued with a review of higher education and, on 17 November 1994, invited an exchange of 'further views on the development of higher education in Hong Kong', with particular reference to the following issues:

(a) provision of sub-degree programmes;
(b) demand for manpower at sub-degree level;
(c) quality assurance of sub-degree programmes;
(d) future development of sub-degree programmes; and
(e) feasibility of a credit unit system at sub-degree level.

### The Initial Meeting

The initial meeting to develop co-operation between CityU and UNN took place in Germany, in July 1993. The opportunity was provided by the Fifth International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education in Bonn; four attended the informal meeting and agreed that there was a sufficient basis of understanding and commitment to explore co-operation further. Attending this meeting were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Professor John Rear (JR) | Pro-Vice-Chancellor, UNN |
| Bradford W Imrie (BWI) | Principal, College of Higher Vocational Studies, CityU |
| Professor Enoch Young (EY) | Acting Academic Secretary, CityU |
| Richard T Armour (RTA) | Head, Academic Planning Unit, CityU |

### Subsequent Meetings in 1993

The next phase involved BWI in a series of meetings to explore the implications of the franchising policies of the Scottish Vocational Education Council (SCOTVEC) and of BTEC. At the end of July, there was a follow-up meeting at UNN between BWI and JR, including Professor Don Cassells (DC), Director of Newcastle Business School and Professor John Wilson (JW), Assistant Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Science and Technology. It was agreed that BWI would arrange for the following information, for eleven programmes, to be sent to UNN

- the definitive course documents;
- examination papers (and model answers);
- quality assurance arrangements;
- details of course advisory committees;
- external examiner reports;
- other information such as numbers of students enrolled.

This information was sent by the College Secretary on 19 August - some by air and the course documents by sea mail.

After the meeting at UNN on 29 July, a crucial meeting was held with BTEC, in London on 2 August, with Margaret Jack (MJ), Director, Quality Assurance and Control, and Andrew Pincott (AP), International Affairs Co-ordinator. AP provided a note on 'Franchising of BTEC Programmes outside United Kingdom' and MJ approved, in principle, the proposed arrangement whereby UNN would act under licence from BTEC to assess the HD programmes at CityU and develop a Memorandum of Co-operation.

**Preliminary Stage (July 1993 to January 1994)**

The preliminary stage then took until 10 January 1994 when, after an exchange of correspondence (BWI/JR), a letter (dated 23.12.93) was received from JR; the following extracts are significant:

> "I have now, at last - sorry for the delay - received indications of support for going ahead from the Faculty of Engineering, Science and Technology (EST) and the Newcastle Business School (NBS). I enclose internal memoranda which indicate present thinking.
>
> I am asking our Secretary and Registrar, Richard Bott, to send you, in the New Year, a draft outline Memorandum of Agreement. You may take it from this present letter that we do wish in principle to proceed." (JR)
>
> - "I would recommend that the Faculty at the very least expresses a willingness to validate these courses within our BTEC licence." (JW)
>
> - "I have absolutely no doubts or reservations about the ability of City Polytechnic to deliver high quality programmes at the required level.
> We would probably need to spend some time with staff in Hong Kong explaining our enhanced emphasis on personal skills development and the need to formally assess this development throughout the programme.
>
> In conclusion, may I say that I am very supportive of this initiative and have for a long time admired the standards achieved by HD students in Hong Kong and Singapore." (Graham Henderson - GH)

The letter was acknowledged (BWI/JR, 14.1.94) with the advice that the College Board (5.1.94) had approved, in principle, the development of collaboration with UNN for BTEC recognition of D/HD courses. This was noted by JW who wrote (26.1.94) to indicate that he would be in Hong Kong for the British Council's Education & Careers Expo, in February; and followed up with a letter (JW/BWI, 18.2.94) with a date for the proposed meeting and confirmation 'that the University of Northumbria at Newcastle would like to collaborate with the College of Higher Vocational Studies in relation to the BTEC initiatives'. He included the following crucial statement:

> "It was also agreed that we would endeavour to complete all of the arrangements so that the BTEC courses could be launched in September of this year (1994)....."

This was crucial in that courses were referred to as BTEC courses and clarification was immediately sought (BWI/JW, 21.2.94) since there was no likelihood that HD courses which had always been internally validated by CPHK, would be permitted to be the responsibility of an external body such as BTEC. At the meeting in Hong Kong, on 28 February, it was agreed that JW would seek clarification regarding the basis of the BTEC arrangement: franchising or validation. In the notes of the meeting it was made clear

> "that validation was the preferred option whereby CPHK students would receive the HD from City University (in the future) and, as an optional extra, apply independently to BTEC for registration and conferment of the HND - on the basis of validation carried out by UNN on behalf of BTEC".

JW followed up this matter with BTEC on his return to the UK and eventually received a response from BTEC on 24 March, which was faxed to Hong Kong the same day with the following, desired position confirmed:

> "However, there is considerable scope for flexibility in the operation of the franchise such that, in practice, it could in effect be the arrangement envisaged in your letter. In particular, local 'ownership' could be reflected in documentation (including certification issued by you under the license agreement), but the University of Northumbria would have the normal responsibilities and accountability of a franchiser."

The BTEC letter, from International Affairs, also advised that Margaret Jack would be in Hong Kong for the Sixth International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education, 19-21 July 1994 (which the author had arranged for CPHK to host).

On this basis it was then appropriate to proceed and acknowledgement was faxed (BWI/JW, 25.3.94) with the following suggestions:

(a) that a draft memorandum of agreement be prepared for consideration by all parties, and

(b) that Professor Graham Henderson (GH), Assistant Director of the Newcastle Business School (UNN Business Faculty) prepare a proposal for a validation visit by UNN staff to Hong Kong in May.

JW had been prompt, professional and effective, with his part in the proceedings and the responsibility now passed to GH who had been appointed to chair the UNN validation panel (acting under licence from BTEC). The first letter (fax 30.2.94) received from GH set out the proposed programme for the visit of the validation panel 'to accredit your portfolio of Higher Diplomas as HNDs of this University'. The portfolio comprised the following:

HD Accountancy
HD Banking & Financial Services
HD Business Studies
HD English for Professional Communication
HD Public Administration and Management
D Social Work
HD Architectural Studies
HD Building
HD Building Services
HD Building Surveying
HD Computer Studies

In the acknowledgement of this letter, BWI (fax 6.4.94) indicated that a draft Memorandum of Agreement was expected so that 'there is a clear basis for our discussions'. This was a reference to the advice received from JR some three months previously, that he was asking the UNN Registrar to prepare a draft outline Memorandum of Agreement. GH replied (fax 21.4.94) that he would be "meeting with the University Registrar in the very near future to progress the drafting of a Memorandum of Co-operation". The draft Memorandum of Co-operation (MC) was first received when the UNN panel visited CPHK in May 1994.

## The Assessment Stage (May 1994 to January 1995)

The validation visit took place over two day (30-31 May); the Report was received on 8 November and noted, inter alia:

> "The validation visit was designed to consider accrediting 11 Higher Diploma (HD) programmes within City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (CPHK) as BTEC HNDs under the UNN BTEC licence."
>
> (using) "a panel of 12 UNN staff chosen in a manner which would ensure appropriate academic expertise in all of the 11 areas being assessed."

The visit was satisfactory for all concerned and the panel recommended that UNN approve the ten HD programmes as BTEC HNDs under the University's BTEC Licence subject to specified conditions (see later). This recommendation was prefaced by the following remarks:

> "The panel were highly impressed with the physical environment, resources, academic standards and approaches to teaching and learning associated with the Higher Diploma programmes within the College."
>
> "The content of all 11 programmes and the level of knowledge and capability achieved by students in each is of at least HND standard; and in all cases constitutes a coherent programme of study worthy of accreditation at HND level."

The recommendation was for approval of ten programmes, the decision on the Diploma in Social Work being deferred because it was in the process of being revalidated; also structures/qualifications in social work, in the UK, were undergoing a major review. Notes of the meetings during the validation visit, were prepared by the College Secretary who had organised the visit.

The 1994 AQHE conference in Hong Kong (19-21 July) presented an opportunity for various matters to be discussed with Margaret Jack (MJ), BTEC, and John Rear (JR), UNN, who knew each other from accreditation work in the UK. JR had brought with him a draft of the Validation Report and of the Memorandum of Co-operation. An informal meeting was also held with Dr W K Kam, Pro-Director, to ensure that he was up to date with developments. For both reports various minor amendments were agreed and annotated, and notes of the meeting were prepared by the College Secretary.

The revised Validation Report was not received until 8 November and was duly submitted to the College Board which, with minor accuracy amendments, approved the Report and, in principle, the development of collaboration with UNN for BTEC recognition of HD/D courses. The amendments were notified to UNN and the first objective of the exercise had been completed: an assessment report which provided international recognition of the quality and standard of the majority (10/12) of CityU's full-time HD programmes, with the standard at least that of the HND. In the context of the UK National Qualifications Framework, the HND is at NVQ Level 4 and is 'generally accepted as pass degree equivalent'.

### Memorandum of Co-operation Stage (May 1994 to March 1995)

The Validation Report had specified the following conditions:

1. A formal agreement, in the form of a "memorandum of co-operation" should be agreed between the CPHK and the University prior to the registration of the first group of students.

2. CPHK must identify, for each programme, mechanisms for the allocation of 7 Common Skills grades to students at the end of the third year of the programme.

3. Other than "language" units, ALL course units are taught and assessed in English.

Condition 1 specified a formal agreement and the first draft of the Memorandum of Co-operation (MC) was prepared by GH during the Validation Visit, discussed and amendments agreed. At UNN the revised MC was then passed to JR, the Registrar and the Head of the Legal Services Unit for approval; the proposed MC eventually reached CityU on 21 October - some five months later. At the same time details of fees were also received based on the number of students registering.

Essentially, the one-off registration fee would have three components: a fixed BTEC fee; a UNN cost for annual moderation; a College cost to cover extra work involved for the BTEC Common Skills Assessment. In round numbers the first two components amounted to $1800 and, after consultation, it was agreed that an additional $1000 would meet the perceived interests of the staff, i.e. a total of $2800.

For 1995/96, the HD registration fee for full-time students is HK$23,060; by the time the student completed the three year programme, the total fees would be about HK$84,000, i.e. the registration fee was 3.3%. All of the student representatives consulted were enthusiastic about the opportunity which would basically provide them with two qualifications for the price of one, i.e. HD(*CityU*) and HND(*UNN*). Registration would be optional at the beginning of the second year of the three year HD for comparability with the two year HND.

This left one outstanding difficulty as far as the staff were concerned - the extra work required for the Common Skills assessment. The decision to proceed would be made by each of the ten HD Course Committees chaired by Course Leaders. Comment had also been made by some Course Leaders that the standing of the HD would be adversely affected by association with the perceived lower level of the BTEC HND.

### Common Skills Assessment (CSA)

On request, CSA information was provided by GH giving details and examples of procedures used at UNN for the seven skill areas:

> managing and developing self; working with and relating to others; communicating; managing tasks and solving problems; applying numeracy; applying technology; applying design and creativity.

A meeting was then held with Course Leaders, on 24 November 1994, to discuss the proposed Memorandum of Co-operation (MC), and the main objection to the CSA requirement seemed to be 'the additional workload (without remuneration) imposed on staff'. Underlying this concern were two factors: the time elapsed (about 6 months) since the Course Leaders had met with the UNN team; and the workload of the staff approaching the end of a busy semester in a year in which the College budget had been adversely affected by budget allocation.

With the former, the notes of the meeting with Course Leaders (30 May) showed that CSA had been discussed but not the procedural or workload implications. Clarification was sought from UNN and GH responded (10 January 1995) stressing that "any good Common Skills system should place emphasis for the identification, recording and development of Common Skills firmly in the hands of the student, and not the member of academic staff". He advised that "there is no necessity to undertake any additional assessment to that which already takes place" and emphasised:

> "However, as long as you provide for the development of competence in all of the seven skills areas, it is entirely at your discretion where those opportunities will be provided, and you would only need to inform (UNN) as a matter of information, rather than an issue of approval."

Prior to receiving this advice from GH, a second Course Leaders' meeting had been held on 9 January to take the opportunity to discuss related matters with David Wagstaff (DW) from BTEC's International Division. DW confirmed the CSA requirement and also provided copies of BTEC information which, inter alia, included the National Qualifications framework with confirmation that the HND, and therefore the HD, were at NVQ4 level corresponding to a pass degree.

With the information provided by DW (BTEC) and GH (UNN), a third meeting of Course Leaders was held on 20 January and there was further discussion about the discretion to minimise the staff workload; also the distribution of the College's component of the registration fee which, basically, would follow the students. There seemed to be clear understanding that CSA was, in effect, a reporting requirement of outcomes identified by students and approved by staff. The following summary of rationale and advantages had been discussed with Course Leaders.

### Rationale and Advantages

The rationale and advantages are summarised thus:

HD Students/Graduates

- The BTEC HND is 'value added' for HD graduates; the HD(*CityU*) entitles students registered with BTEC, to be awarded the HND(*UNN*), on condition that students pay a registration fee and that they are reported as passing the BTEC Common Skills Assessment.

- Registration is at the beginning of the second year for FT students (first year for PT students). The single registration fee is likely to be less than 5% of the total tuition fees. The fee will be set each year to cover all direct and indirect costs.

- BTEC qualifications are widely recognised by employers; also by professional bodies for exemptions for membership.

- The additional HND should give CityU HD graduates a competitive edge when seeking employment when VTC HD graduates come on to the market in 1996. A major benefit of the BTEC HND is that it is effectively a 'passport' to honours degree level studies in the UK. In general, the HND is considered to be equivalent to a pass degree.

College Staff

- Professional linkages with UNN will provide enhanced opportunities for staff as well as students - including joint research projects, staff and student exchange, staff sabbatical leave, for example.

- The BTEC regulations require additional work from staff (and students) involved with the assessment of student performance in the relevant HD programmes. This will take the form of reporting, separately, specified skills performance for each student (already assessed in various second and third year modules). This information will be available to the students and will be of interest to potential employers.

- There will also be a requirement for notification regarding major changes to HD programmes and to quality assurance procedures.

City University

- CityU's validation autonomy for the HD will not be affected. HND assessment is carried out by UNN acting on behalf of BTEC. The HND is a BTEC award conferred by UNN. In 1994, UNN was one of 10% of UK universities which received two or more 'excellent' grades for teaching (business and law). UNN has a size and profile similar to CityU.

- UGC has recommended international recognition of qualifications. BTEC has international standing in UK, Europe, Asia and in Commonwealth countries. The BTEC HND is a form of benchmarking, i.e. a minimum standard for this type of qualification corresponding to Level 4 of the UN National Qualifications Framework. (NVQ4 is at pass degree level and may be a basis for introduction of an "Associate Degree" in the UK.)

**City University**

There is no doubt that the proposed Memorandum of Co-operation (MC) represented an excellent opportunity for CityU's HD students and graduates; also for College staff. With the confirmation of the Validation Report, international recognition of the HD would continue under the provisions of the MC.

Understandably the Vice-Chancellor had been cautious about the proposal because, for a long time, there was nothing on paper for consideration. Further, UNN could not be considered to be a prestigious international university - although making significant progress as a new UK university. Finally, there had always been a concern that CityU might somehow relinquish self-accreditation for the HD. In this regard, the use of the BTEC vocabulary[4] of 'franchise', 'validation' and even 'competences' has been potentially misleading for this form of international co-operation.

The benefits to CityU cannot readily be estimated but the MC would ensure external recognition of the standing and standard of the HND for

- UGC's introduction of Teaching and Learning Quality Process Audits in 1996;
- the possible introduction of a vocational qualifications framework as an outcome of the UGC's review of sub-degree education as part of its review of higher education, to be reported in November 1995;
- the eventual introduction of a credit accumulation and transfer system with articulation between sub-degree and degree levels - the latter possibly moving to a four year honours degree.

It is entirely appropriate that the decision be made by the Course Committees. The only issue is that of introducing and operating a system of reporting the outcomes of common skills assessment - assessment which is already taking place. Common skills are skills which are and should be common, i.e. evident in the capability of HND/HD graduates. These are skills expected and increasingly required by employers. These are skills which are more than competences, capability being inclusive of competence, co-operation, creativity and cope-ability[5].

**Conclusion and Comment**

All but one of the Course Committees decided that they did not wish to accept the offer of a Memorandum of Co-operation which would provide students with opportunity for registration for a BTEC HND awarded by the University of Northumbria at Newcastle. The main issue was that of the extra work involved for staff and students, for compliance with BTEC's Common Skills Assessment (CSA) requirements - despite a fee component to cover staff costs and the confirmation that the CSA requirements would involve reporting of existing assessment and not additional assessment by staff.

The following report is an example of conclusions reached by Course Committees:

> "I raised the issue of the BTEC HND at the recent Course Committee. After some discussion, the student members suggested that as the staff would be involved in some extra work they should make the decision. I have now consulted the staff and only 1 was in favour of offering HND. One of the reasons for the no vote was that staff felt that by linking HND with HD it might lower the standing of our HD. For example, currently where British Universities now accept our HD graduates for Master's courses, they may not do so in future, if they see it as being equivalent to an HND qualification."

The issue that 'linking HND with HD might lower the standing of our HD' is somewhat perplexing. Some three years ago, issues of standing and standard of the HD had been addressed and now form part of the College's Information Leaflets[3]. This had established a minimum standard equivalence of HD and HND in terms of the National Qualifications

Framework. Further, it had been clearly confirmed that the arrangement would enable HD graduates to obtain an additional qualification conferred by another university.

Reduction of delays in responses from UNN which lengthened the period between the validation visit and the point of decision, might have made a difference to the outcome; also fuller discussion of the Common Skills Assessment during the validation visit. A hiatus effect was caused by these delays which included: a lost disk; a broken leg (GH); legal clarifications; liaison with BTEC; and 'hand-off' effects due to the requirement for a range of people to be involved.

International recognition is still part of the University Grants Committee's mission and the majority of City University's Higher Diploma programmes have that recognition as a result of the BTEC/UNN validation visit. For all diplomas which come under the jurisdiction of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), there is an ongoing formal agreement with City and Guilds (UK) for recognition.

There had been full consultation in the College and the Course Committees had recommended that the offer of a Memorandum of Co-operation should not be accepted.

This recommendation was conveyed to the College Board at its meeting on 17 May. Unexpectedly, the student members reported strong student support for the opportunity to register for the UNN Higher National Diploma. It was agreed that the matter should 'lie on the table' until the next meeting for which the student members would prepare a submission. UNN and BTEC were informed and the final outcome is awaited.

**References**

[1] Guide to BTEC Qualifications, London: Business & Technology Education Council, Nov. 1994.

[2] Quality Education for Professional Excellence, CPHK 10th Anniversary Commemorative Album, City Polytechnic of Hong Kong, 1994.

[3] 'Information Leaflets', College of Higher Vocational Studies, City University of Hong Kong, 1995.

[4] BTEC Policy Handbook, London: Business & Technology Education Council, Sept. 1994.

[5] Burgess, T (Ed) Education for Capability, Windsor: NFER, 1986.

# Information Leaflets

香港城市大學
City University
of Hong Kong

# COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

## Information Leaflets

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

# Information Leaflets

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1. History, Mission Statement and General Information
2. Standard & Standing of Higher Diploma
3. Courses/Divisions
4. Student Numbers
5. Graduate Opportunities
6. Diploma Opportunities for School Leavers
7. Language Proficiency Trends
8. Tertiary Tuition Fees and Cost Trends

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

# Information Leaflet One: History, Mission Statement and General Information

## History and Organization

City Polytechnic of Hong Kong was formally established by Ordinance on 1 January 1984. The Polytechnic began operation in October 1984 and has celebrated its tenth anniversary in 1994. The total student population in 94/95 is 15,200, comprising about 9,300 full-time and 5,900 part-time students. In November 1994, City Polytechnic was awarded university status and became City University of Hong Kong (CityU).

The mission of the University is to provide higher education for professional practice which anticipates and responds to community needs and the effects of social and technological change. The University offers access to its human, physical and technological resources for the advancement of society. It is committed to freedom of enquiry and the pursuit of excellence in teaching, scholarship and research, and to interaction with the practising professions and industry.

In 1991, a vocational Faculty was established in the form of the **College of Higher Vocational Studies** - to coordinate and administer Higher Diploma and Diploma courses. In 1995/96, 12 Higher Diploma courses and 1 Diploma course will be offered by the four Divisions of the College:

* Division of Commerce;
* Division of Language Studies;
* Division of Social Studies; and
* Division of Technology.

On 27 March 1995, Council resolved that the Division of Humanities & Social Sciences should be split into the Division of Language Studies and the Division of Social Studies.

## Mission Statement of the College

The College aims to provide programmes of higher vocational studies to meet the needs of students, their future employers and the community of Hong Kong.

The College is committed to:

* excellence in teaching;
* student competency with communication and learning skills;
* fitness for purpose of vocational programmes to ensure graduate capability;
* co-operation and interaction with the practising professions and employers;
* caring for the well-being of all students and staff of the College;
* dissemination of knowledge and development of education;
* high standards of scholarship and professionalism of academic staff;
* staff development for all College staff; and
* enhancement of the standing of University.

## Course Advisory Committees

To assist staff with the planning and development of courses which are vocationally appropriate, Council has approved the establishment of Course Advisory Committees (CAC). The Chair and members are representatives of the relevant sectors of employment and the community for which HD/D graduates are being prepared. CACs are a vital part of quality assurance for courses which aim at providing a high standard of vocational education and training for the future senior vocational personnel of Hong Kong.

The following five CACs have been established:

| | |
|---|---|
| Division of Commerce: | CAC for Commerce |
| Division of Language Studies: | CAC for Language Studies |
| Division of Social Studies: | CAC for Social Studies |
| Division of Technology: | CAC for Building & Construction |
| | CAC for Computer Studies |

## General and Course Information

Information about the Higher Diploma and Diploma courses at CityU is available in various forms:

* The **CityU Calendar** and the **Undergraduate Prospectus** are the official sources of information.

* Information is also available in specially prepared leaflets:
- **HD/D Course Leaflets**
- **Admissions Information for Teachers**
- **College Information Leaflet Series**

* **Electronic Prospectus**: user-friendly HD/D course information and entrance requirement is available on floppy disk

* **Videos** on: On the Right Course (9 minutes, English & Chinese)

* **Student Guide "Get Ready for City University"**: This bilingual publication has been prepared by a College working group to help new students with the transition from secondary school to the University. The Student Guide is given to first-year students at the beginning of the academic year. A Part-time Student Guide is also available for part-time students.

* Enquiries about course information of City University may be forwarded to the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
(Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086)

February 1995 (Revised)

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

# Information Leaflet Two: Higher Diploma - Standing and Standard

## Introduction

In 1991, an ad hoc Working Group on Higher Diploma was set up by the College Board to review the standing and standard of Higher Diploma in Hong Kong. The Working Group undertook an overview of the HD, which represents the highest level of vocational training in Hong Kong

The conclusions of the Working Group are presented in this paper which gives a brief account of the expected job competencies of senior vocational staff (SVS) positions likely to be occupied by Higher Diploma graduates; the market value of Higher Diploma/Diploma qualification, i.e. financial standing on first employment; significance of workplace or simulated experience in vocational training; and the academic and professional recognition of HD. Particular consideration has been given to identifying the equivalent standard of HD in Hong Kong in the National Qualifications Framework in the United Kingdom.

## Standing

The Higher Diploma is the highest level of undergraduate vocational qualification in Hong Kong and represents the completion of a programme of vocational education designed to develop HD students with the attitudes, knowledge and skills required for employment in a wide range of occupations.

The Higher Diploma (HD) course is a three year full-time course with HKCEE entry requirements. For 1995-96, there will be more than 60 HD courses offered by City University, Hong Kong Polytechnic University (mainly two year full-time with HKALE entry), and HK Technical Colleges at Chai Wan and Tsing Yi. HD courses are available in part-time mode and Opening Learning Institute of HK also offers HD courses in part-time mode.

The universities are part of the higher education system managed by the University Grants Committee while the HK Technical Colleges are under the responsibility of the Vocational Training Council. It is Government policy to set fees for HD courses at 75% of degree course fees.

It is expected that HD graduates will take up employment in the public and private sectors of Hong Kong, which may lead to positions as senior vocational staff (SVS) with middle management responsibilities. As such they should have capabilities including vocational competence, communication skills, learning skills, information management skills, and preferably appropriate project management skills, together with appreciation of social, economic and political development in Hong Kong.

Standing can also be related to the 'market value' of the HD/D qualification i.e. financial standing on first employment. In Hong Kong, although the private sector works as a market economy and employs many of the HD/D graduates, a significant number are employed in the public sector for which staffing requirements and salary levels are determined by Government. Public service employment, however, does not have uniform recognition of the HD qualification and this is being addressed.

Over the last four years (1991-1994), the average salary of the HD graduate has ranged between 85% and 91% of the degree graduate salary. More details are given on Leaflet 5.

## Standard

Internationally, the bachelor's degree represents a benchmark standard for higher education. Not all countries have the higher or higher national diploma as a qualification. In Hong Kong, the honours degree course is three years full-time with entry requirements based on HKALE. The standard of the HD is derived from the following considerations and may be considered as a minimum Hong Kong standard:

- The HD qualification is based on a three year, full-time course with entry requirements based on HKCEE; with provision for part-time study which meets the needs of students in employment; on this basis the Diploma is two thirds of the HD i.e. a two year, full-time course;

- The educational process should provide opportunity for competence to be developed by practice within the course and, where possible, by workplace or simulated experience that provides exposure to vocational practices and to role models in the form of SVS practitioners;

- The outcomes should guarantee capability based on vocational competence together with related transferable skills of communication, learning (for continuing development), and of information and project management;

- The CityU HD qualification has been assessed to be at a similar or higher level to the Higher National Diploma (HND) of the UK Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC). HNDs are generally equivalent to NVQ4 (Note 1) of the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). The BTEC HND is generally accepted as pass degree equivalent;

- For advanced standing and exemption the maximum available recognition, in Hong Kong, for the HD is 50% of the three year honours degree; in the UK the maximum recognition is two thirds of the three year honours degree, and there is also direct entry to a range of Master's programmes; professional institutions do not generally accept such advanced standing;

- Professional recognition of the HD usually takes the form of full exemption from the foundation part, together with partial exemption from the vocational part, of the professional examination requirements for professional membership. Professional recognition of academic qualifications generally depends on the relevancy and rigour of the course rather than the type of award (e.g. HD, First Degree, Master's Level, etc.). Our HD courses are regarded by professional bodies as highly professional/vocational orientated.

## Entry Trends

During this period of increasing expenditure, cost and increasing student numbers, two admissions schemes have been developed: JUPAS is responsible for full-time undergraduate degree applications and JASPIC for sub-degree.

Only England and Hong Kong have three year honours degree programmes and, as in England, entry to degree programmes requires A-Level passes; sub-degree programmes (with the exception of PolyU) require HKCEE passes.

With the expansion of FYFD (first year, first degree) places, it was expected that there would be a decline in the proportion of A-Level students entering sub-degree programmes. At CityU this is not the case as shown by the following table.

Proportion of HKAL Examination Passes for HD/D Students

| HKAL Passes | 1990/91 | 1991/92 | 1992/93 | 1993/94 | 1994/95 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| None | 60% | 68% | 65% | 39% | 28% |
| 1 | 32% | 22% | 21% | 42% | 33% |
| >1 | 8% | 10% | 14% | 19% | 39% |

Note 1

**Level 4**: Achievement of competence in a broad range of complex, technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts, with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources.

Guide to BTEC Qualifications, BTEC, London, November 1994

March 1995 (Revised)

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

## Information Leaflet Three: Courses/Divisions

*For information about courses at City University please contact the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. (Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086/2788 9570)*

The College was established on 1 January 1991 to manage the co-ordination and development of courses at the Higher Diploma/Diploma level in City University. The College is, in effect, a vocational Faculty and the largest, with responsibility for about 36% of the student enrolment.

| DIVISION | COURSES | MODE |
|---|---|---|
| Commerce | HD Accountancy<br>HD Banking & Financial Services<br>HD Business Studies | FT/PTE<br>FT/PTE<br>FT/PTE |
| Language Studies | HD Applied Chinese Studies<br>HD English for Professional Communication<br>HD Translation & Interpretation | FT<br>FT<br>FT/PTE |
| Social Studies | HD Public Administration & Management<br>D Social Work | FT/PTE<br>FT/PTE |
| Technology | HD Architectural Studies<br>HD Building<br>HD Building Services Engineering<br>HD Building Surveying<br>HD Computer Studies | FT/PTD&E<br>FT/PTD&E<br>FT/PTE<br>FT/PTD&E<br>FT/PTE |

*(FT - full time; PT - part time; D - Day; E - Evening)*

## GENERAL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS (Summary)

### 1. Higher Diploma and Diploma Courses (HKCEE level entry)

*To be eligible for admission an applicant must either:*

1.1 hold HKCEE with grade E or above, or GCSE with grade C or above, in at least five subjects, and

1.2 hold HKCEE with grade E or above in English Language (Syllabus B), or GCSE with grade C or above in English Language or an equivalent, which may be included in 1.1 above, and

1.3 hold HKCEE with grade E or above in Chinese Language, or grade E or above in a language other than Chinese or English in HKCEE; or GCSE grade C or above in a language other than Chinese or English, which may be included in 1.1. above; or

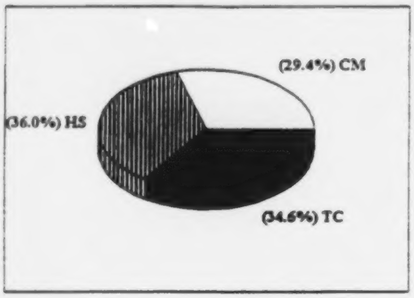
1.4 be a "mature applicant" of at least 23 years of age on 1 September immediately prior to admission.

In addition to the General Entrance Requirements, each course may have other entrance requirements. Such information can be obtained from City University's Prospectus and from the Academic Secretary.

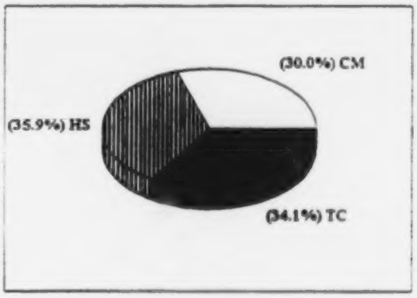
## NEW INTAKE 1993-96
## COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES(1)

| | 1993-94 | | 1994-95 | | 1995-96(2) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FT | PT | FT | PT | FT | PT |
| Commerce Division | 329 | 315 | 318 | 312 | 420 | 420 |
| FTE(3)(CM) | 447 | | 435 | | 578 | |
| Humanities & Social Sciences Division(5) | 491 | 146 | 464 | 151 | 580 | 170 |
| FTE(HS) | 546 | | 521 | | 644 | |
| Technology Division | 432 | 248 | 419 | 200 | 444 | 225 |
| FTE(TC) | 525 | | 494 | | 528 | |
| **Total College Intake** | **1252** | **709** | **1201** | **663** | **1444** | **815** |
| **FTE(COL)** | **1518** | | **1450** | | **1750** | |

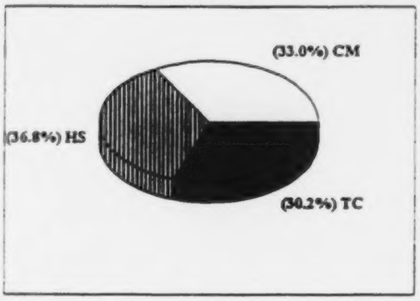
**1993-1994**



**1994-1995**



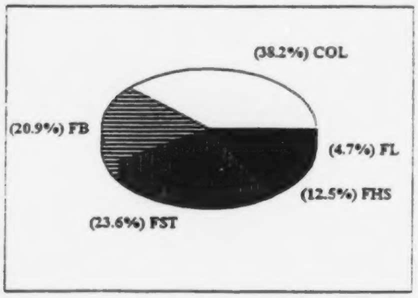
**1995-96**



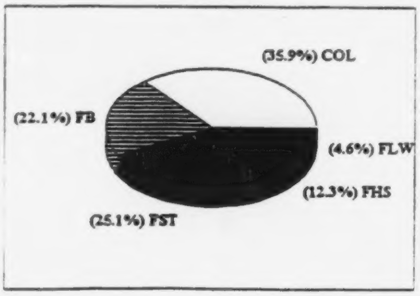
## NEW INTAKE 1993-96
## CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG(6)

| | 1993-94 FTE | 1994-95 FTE | 1995-96(2) FTE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **College of Higher Vocational Studies** | **1518** | **1450** | **1750** |
| Business Faculty | 832 | 892 | 1018 |
| Science & Technology Faculty | 937 | 1012 | 1141 |
| Humanities & Social Sciences Faculty | 497 | 496 | 537 |
| Law Faculty(4) | 188 | 187 | 203 |
| CityU Total | 3972 | 4036 | 4649 |

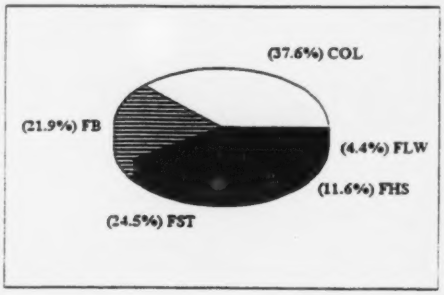
**1993-94**



**1994-95**



**1995-96**



Notes:
(1) Information from CityU Executive Information System January 1995.
(2) 1995-96 are projected numbers.
(3) FTE: Full-time equivalent; 1 PT student: 0.375 FT student.
(4) HD Legal Studies will continue to be the responsibility of the Law Faculty.
(5) For 1995-96, split into the Division of Language Studies and Social Studies.
(6) Formerly City Polytechnic of Hong Kong

## CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
## COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

### Information Leaflet Four: Student Numbers(1)

*For information about courses at City University please contact the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. (Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086)*

| | 1993-94 | | 1994-95 | | 1995-96(2) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subject Area/Course | FT | PT | FT | PT | FT | PT |
| **COMMERCE DIVISION** | | | | | | |
| HD Accountancy | 268 | 223 | 324 | 321 | 390 | 432 |
| HD Banking & Financial Services | 68 | 60 | 124 | 112 | 194 | 175 |
| HD Business Studies | 488 | 445 | 435 | 464 | 400 | 490 |
| Sub-total | 824 | 728 | 883 | 897 | 984 | 1097 |
| **HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES(3)** | | | | | | |
| HD Applied Chinese Studies | 174 | – | 177 | – | 193 | – |
| HD English for Professional Communication | 187 | – | 185 | – | 194 | – |
| HD Public Administration & Management | 286 | 153 | 291 | 134 | 324 | 156 |
| HD Translation & Interpretation | 183 | 131 | 180 | 150 | 184 | 162 |
| D Social Work | 287 | 183 | 355 | 187 | 357 | 191 |
| Sub-total | 1117 | 467 | 1188 | 471 | 1252 | 509 |
| **TECHNOLOGY DIVISION** | | | | | | |
| HD Architectural Studies | 141 | 74 | 156 | 89 | 143 | 102 |
| HD Building | 128 | 130 | 133 | 112 | 132 | 111 |
| HD Building Services Engineering | 134 | 100 | 136 | 113 | 139 | 123 |
| HD Building Surveying | 115 | 92 | 121 | 89 | 138 | 91 |
| HD Computer Studies | 626 | 325 | 638 | 266 | 638 | 231 |
| Sub-total | 1144 | 721 | 1184 | 669 | 1190 | 658 |
| **Total College Students** | **3085** | **1916** | **3255** | **2037** | **3426** | **2264** |

**FTE- FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FT - 0.375 PT)**

| | 1993-94 | 1994-95 | 1995-96 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **College** | 3804 (35.4%) | 4019 (35.2%) | 4275 (35.5%) |
| **Faculty of:** | | | |
| **Business** | 2398 (22.3%) | 2495 (21.9%) | 2722 (22.6%) |
| **Humanities & Social Sciences** | 1561 (14.5%) | 1607 (14.1%) | 1497 (12.4%) |
| **Law** | 367 (3.4%) | 358 (3.1%) | 372 (3.1%) |
| **Science & Technology** | 2619 (24.4%) | 2937 (25.7%) | 3185 (26.4%) |
| CityU TOTAL(4) | 10749 | 11416 | 12051 |

(1) Information from CityU Executive Information System January 1995
(2) 1995-96 are projected numbers
(3) For 1995-96, split into the Division of Language Studies and Social Studies
(4) Includes Research Degrees

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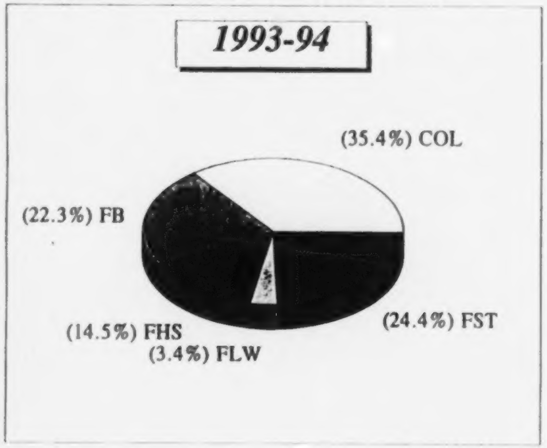
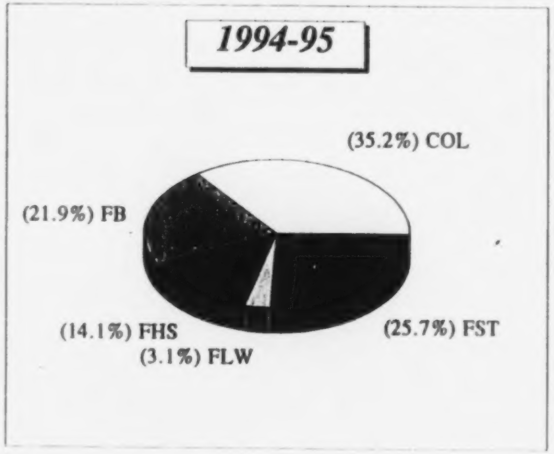
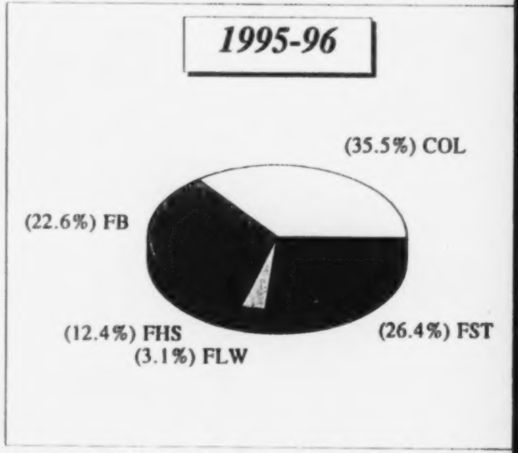
## CityU - DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS

## FTE - Full-time Equivalent (FT + 0.375 PT)


1993-94


1994-95


1995-96

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

# Information Leaflet Five: Graduate Opportunities

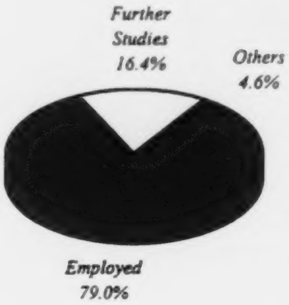
*For information about courses at City University please contact the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. (Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086)*

The following information is taken from the Graduate Employment Survey 1994. This survey is conducted annually by the Counselling Service of the Student Affairs Office to collect employment information on the first job destinations of the current year's full-time graduates. The survey closed on 31 December 1994 and provided information on the employment situation of graduates six months after graduation.

A total of 2372 full-time students graduated: 1467 (61.8%) students were awarded the Bachelor's Degree, while 807 (34.0%) and 98 (4.1%) students were awarded the Higher Diploma and Diploma respectively. The response number was 2291 (96.6%).

## Employment Status

1. Compared with degree graduates:
   - less HD/D graduates sought full time employment. (79.0% vs 86.0%)
   - more HD/D graduates pursued further studies. (16.4% vs 7.3%)
   - lower percentage of unemployment and underemployment. (3.3% vs 5.7%))



2. Basic monthly salary of HD/D was $9,391 which was $1,163 (12.3%) less than Degree graduates ($10,554).

## Employment Sector

3. General pattern similar to the degree graduates; well-received in various sectors.

4. A higher percentage of employment in non-profit making organisations than the average (16.8% vs 10.9%).

## Job Appraisal

5. Compared to degree graduates, HD/D graduates have a slightly higher satisfaction rate for the jobs obtained (77.4% vs 74.2%) and perceived relevance to course of study was marginally more positive (87.0% vs 85.9%).

## Further Studies

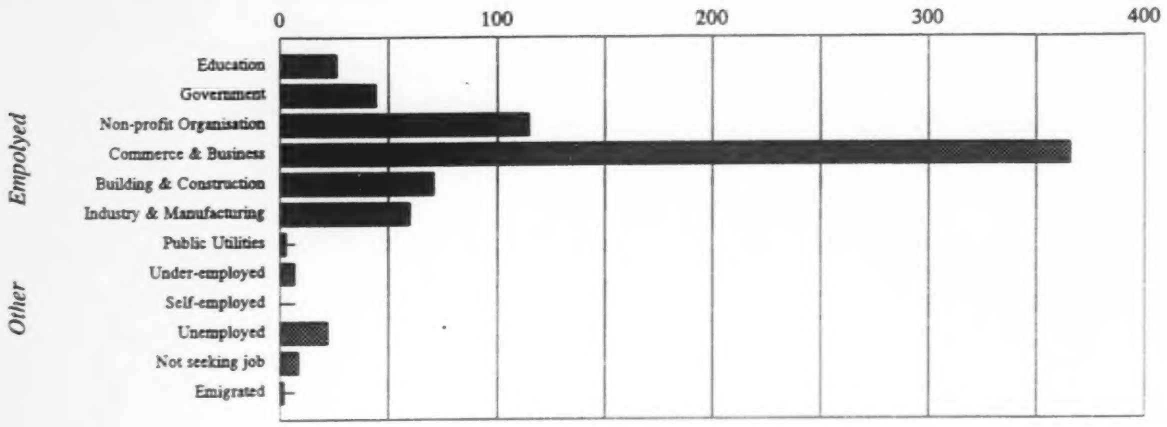
6. Of the HD/D graduates proceeding with further studies, the majority (90.3%) decided to pursue a Bachelor's Degree. In addition, 8.2% were successfully enrolled in a Master's programme.

7. For those pursuing further studies, 40.3% studied locally and 59.7% studied overseas.

February 1995 (Revised)

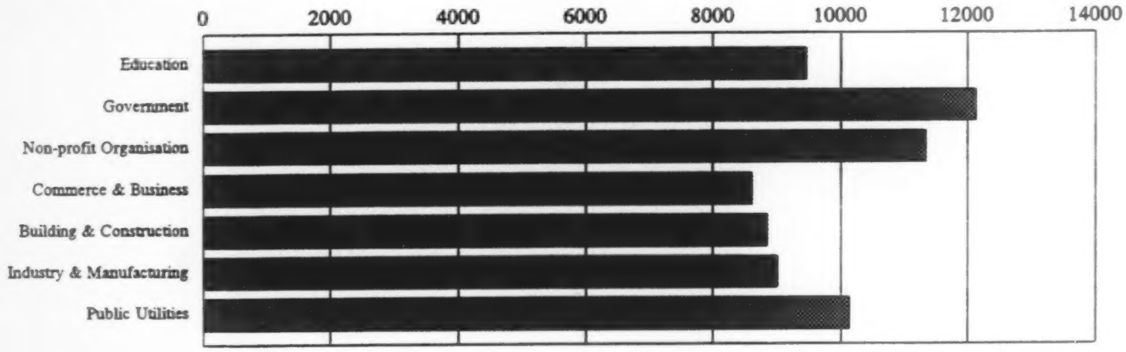
### Employment Status and Employment Sectors

This chart shows the employment status and the distribution of employment sectors of the 1994 higher diploma and diploma graduates.



### Average Monthly Salary

This chart shows the average monthly salary, including allowances and commissions, for the various employment sectors The basic monthly average for CityU Higher Diploma/Diploma graduates is $9,391 per month.
(For comparison, the average monthly salary for degree graduates is $10,554.)



### Basic Monthly Salary by Level of Award - Comparison of 1991 to 1994 Graduates

(Graduate Employment Survey 1994 - Student Affairs Office)

| Level of Award | Year of Graduation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1991 [HK$] | 1992 [HK$] | 1993 [HK$] | 1994 [HK$] |
| Bachelor Degree (BD) | 7598 (-3.2%) | 8205 (8.0%) | 9103 (10.9%) | 10554 (15.9%) |
| Difference (BD-HD) | 887 | 766 | 908 | 1525 |
| Higher Diploma (HD) | 6711 (5.0%) | 7439 (10.8%) | 8195 (10.2%) | 9029 (10.2%) |
| *Proportion (HD/BD)* | 88.3% | 90.7% | 90.0% | 85.6% |
| Diploma | 8803 (9.7%) | 9811 (11.5%) | 10870 (10.8%) | 11924 (9.7%) |
| **Overall** | **7368 (4.6%)*** | **8028 (9.0%)*** | **8846 (10.2%)*** | **10132 (14.5%)*** |

*(% of increase over previous year)

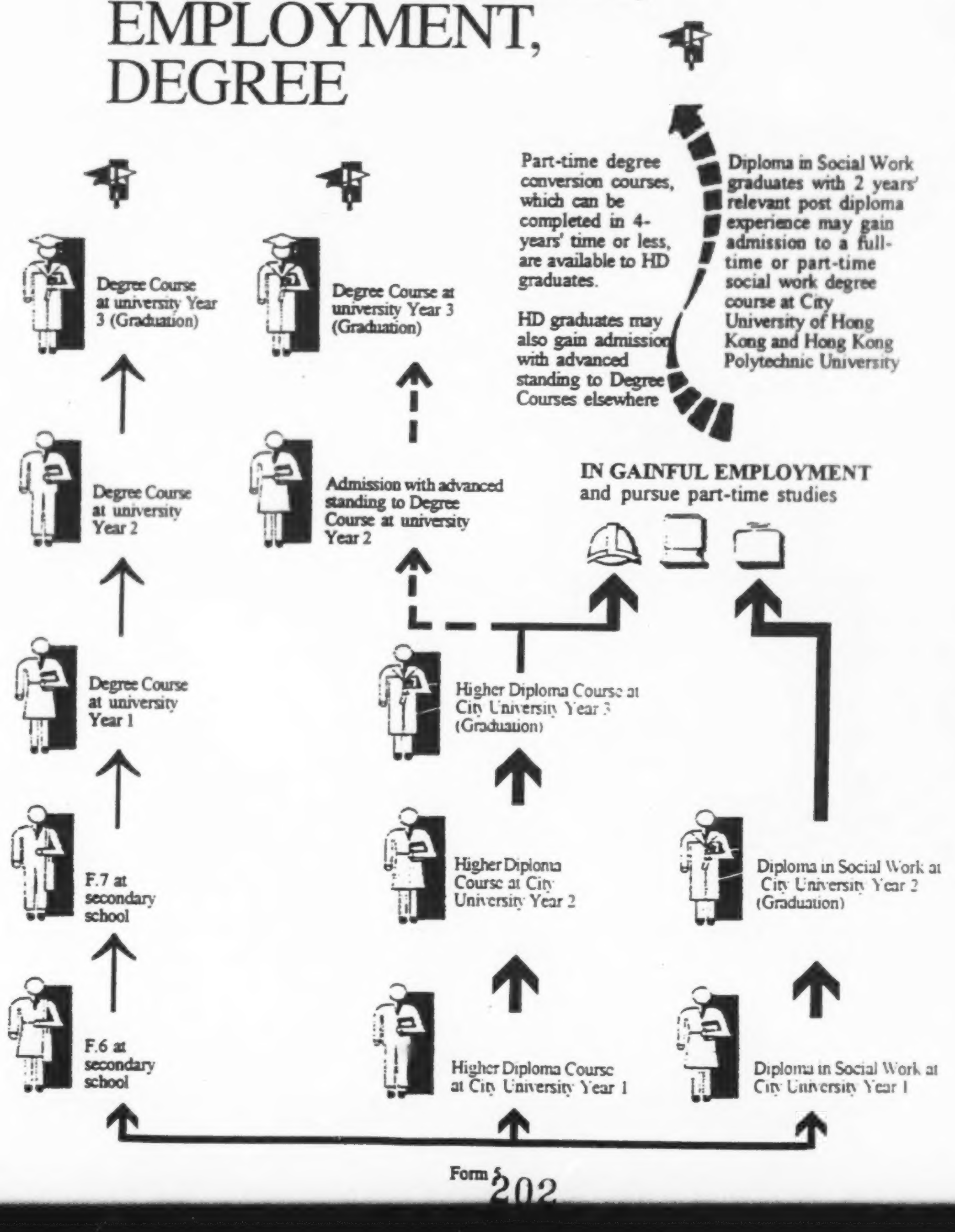
CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
COLLEGE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL STUDIES

## Information Leaflet Six: Diploma Opportunities for the School Leavers

*For information about courses at City University please contact the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. (Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086)*

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE SCHOOL LEAVERS

# DIPLOMA, HIGHER DIPLOMA, EMPLOYMENT, DEGREE



Degree Course at university Year 3 (Graduation)

Degree Course at university Year 2

Degree Course at university Year 1

F.7 at secondary school

F.6 at secondary school

Degree Course at university Year 3 (Graduation)

Admission with advanced standing to Degree Course at university Year 2

Higher Diploma Course at City University Year 3 (Graduation)

Higher Diploma Course at City University Year 2

Higher Diploma Course at City University Year 1

Part-time degree conversion courses, which can be completed in 4-years' time or less, are available to HD graduates.

HD graduates may also gain admission with advanced standing to Degree Courses elsewhere

Diploma in Social Work graduates with 2 years' relevant post diploma experience may gain admission to a full-time or part-time social work degree course at City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polytechnic University

**IN GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT**
and pursue part-time studies

Diploma in Social Work at City University Year 2 (Graduation)

Diploma in Social Work at City University Year 1

Form 5

# HONG KONG : FULL TIME HIGHER DIPLOMA COURSES (1995-96)

| City University of Hong Kong | Hong Kong Technical Colleges (Chai Wan; Tsing Yi) | | Hong Kong Polytechnic University |
|---|---|---|---|
| Architectural Studies*<br>Building*<br>Building Services Engineering*<br>Building Surveying*<br>Computer Studies* | Applied Biology<br>Environmental Technology<br>Food Science & Technology<br>Materials & Instrumentation<br>Pharmaceutical Technology | Electronic Engineering<br>Computer Engineering<br>Communications Engineering<br>Marine Communication & Electronic Technology<br>Electrical Engineering | Mathematics, Statistics & Computing<br>Hotel Management<br>Coloration & Finishing<br>Fashion & Clothing<br>Textile Processing<br>Fashion & Textile Merchandising |
| Accountancy*<br>Banking & Financial Services*<br>Business Studies* | Business & Computing<br>Accountancy<br>Insurance Studies<br>Transport Studies | Hotel & Catering Management*<br>Travel & Tourism Management* | 2-year Courses<br>Information Systems |
| Applied Chinese Studies<br>English for Professional Communication<br>Public Administration & Management*<br>Translation & Interpretation* | Software Engineering<br>Applied Statistics & Computing<br>Information Systems<br>Information Technology | Manufacturing Engineering (Advanced Manufacturing Technology)<br>Manufacturing Engineering (Computer Aided Engineering)<br>Manufacturing Engineering (Product Engineering & Design)<br>Manufacturing Engineering (Computer Control Engineering) | Applied Physics<br>Chemical Technology<br>Civil Engineering<br>Building Technology & Management<br>Building Services Engineering<br>Engineering Surveying |
| | Civil Engineering<br>Structural Engineering | | |
| | Graphics Design<br>Industrial Design | Mechanical Engineering<br>Building Services Engineering<br>Marine Engineering | Electrical Engineering<br>Electronic Engineering<br>Manufacturing Engineering<br>Mechanical Engineering<br>Shipping Management Studies |
| | | | Medical Laboratory Science |

**Notes**

All courses listed are 3-year courses except otherwise stated.

The entry requirements for 2-year courses are based on the HK Advanced Level Examination.

**Notes:**

(1) In Hong Kong, the 3-year full-time Higher Diploma courses have entry requirements based on the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE).

(2) Courses with an asterisk* are also offered in part-time mode for the Higher Diploma.

(3) The Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong currently offers the following part-time Higher Diploma courses:

HD Business Studies
HD Psychology

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## Information Leaflet Seven: Language Proficiency Trends

Reports indicate that College intakes in the last few years have tended to show a gradually falling proficiency level, especially in English and, to a lesser extent, in Chinese. This pattern is probably not surprising in view of the government policy of making more tertiary places available to school leavers. However, it is very important that such trends continue to be monitored and, where appropriate, further action taken. The Figures below illustrate the language proficiency trends of full-time and part-time students:

### Performance of College Students in HKCEE English Syllabus B

For both full-time and part-time students, there has been a steady, sometimes sharp, decline in best HKCEE English Syllabus "B" results for A to C grades, with a substantial increase in students scoring E (Figures 1a and 2a). By 1994, under 19% of full-time students and only about 11% of part-time students had achieved a "C" or above (Figures 1b and 2b).

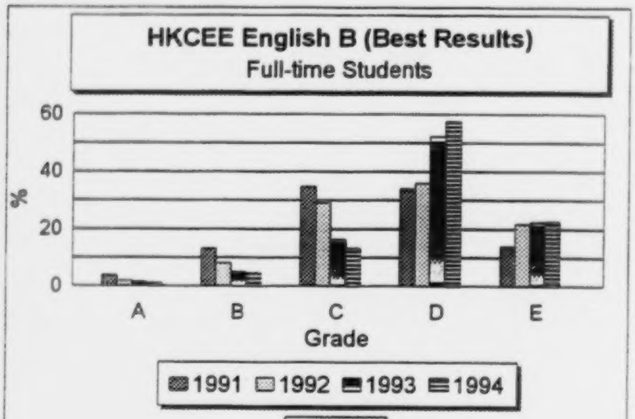

*Figure 1a*

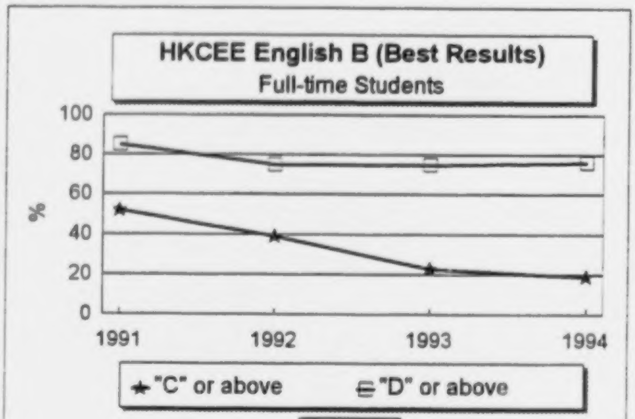

*Figure 1b*

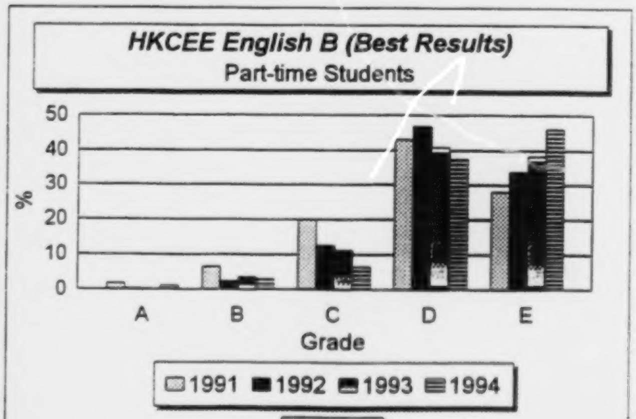

*Figure 2a*

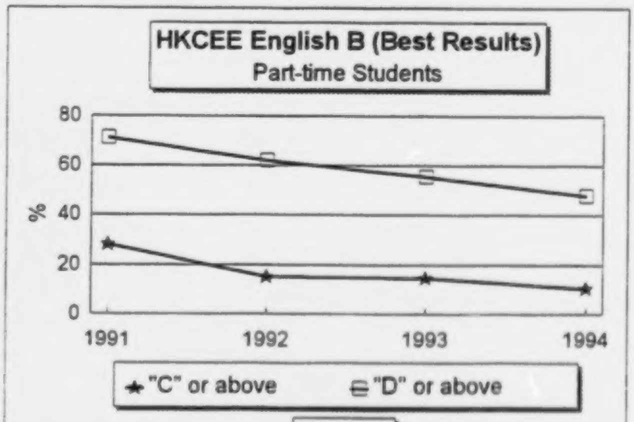

*Figure 2b*

**Performance of College Students in HKCEE Chinese Language**

The percentage of full-time students achieving A or B grades in HKCEE Chinese language has gradually fallen (Figure 3a). By 1994, only 49% were achieving "C" or above (Figure 3b).

Part-time students' entry scores have generally shown a tendency for scores at higher grades, A to C, to fall and for more students to enter with a grade "E" (Figure 4a). This resulted in a drop in the numbers of students scoring "C" or above and "D" or above from 1990 to 1994.

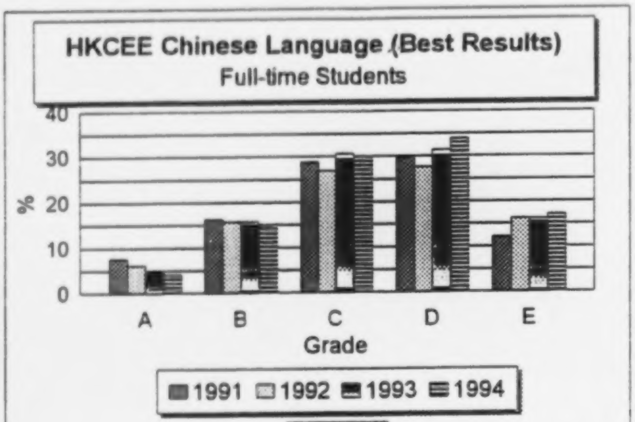

Figure 3a

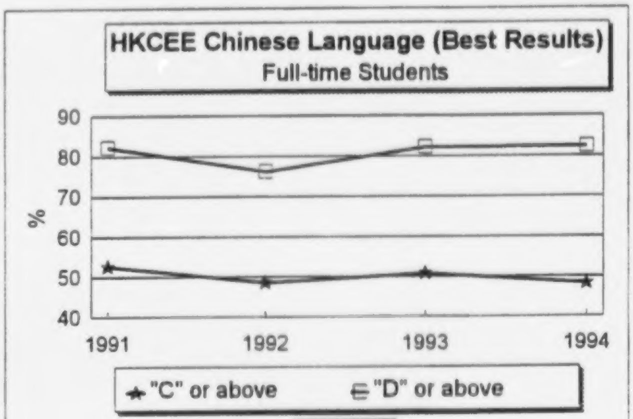

Figure 3b

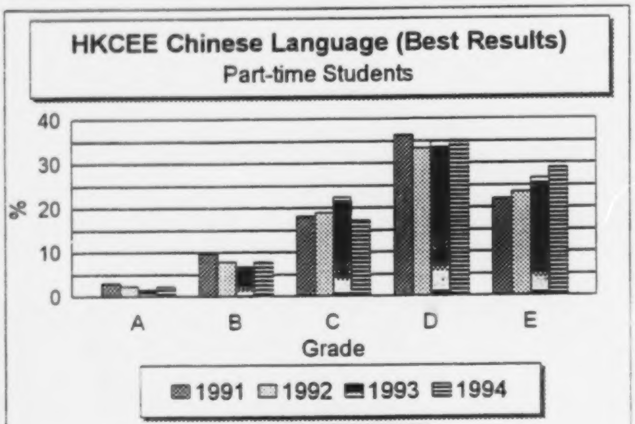

Figure 4a

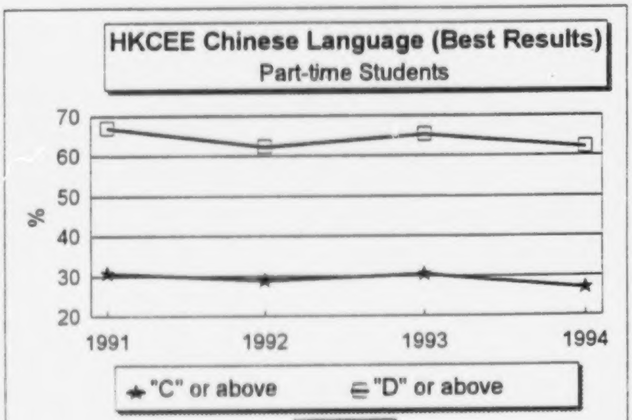

Figure 4b

CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
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# Information Leaflet Eight: Tertiary Tuition Fees and Cost Trends

*For information about courses at City University please contact the Academic Secretary's Office at 83 Tat Chee Avenue, Kowloon, Hong Kong. (Tel: 2788 9094 Fax: 2788 9086)*

## Tertiary Tuition Fees

In 1991, Government decided that there was a case for increasing the fee proportion of the costs of tertiary education - to be met by those who can afford to pay. For 1992-93, the estimated recovery rate was 10.6% and it is the Government's intention to increase this to 18% by 1997-98. As a result, student fees have increased substantially in the past two years and will continue until 1998. Details are shown in the table.

| Year | Estimated Cost Recovery Rate (%) | Fee ($) | | % increase over previous year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Degree | Sub-degree | |
| 1992-93 (A) | 8.2 | 11,600 | 9,000 | 16/20 |
| 1993-94 (A) | 10.6 | 17,000 | 12,750 | 46.6/41.7 |
| 1994-95 (A) | 13.5 | 24,000 | 18,000 | 41.2 |
| 1995-96 (A) | 16 | 30,750 | 23,065 | 28.1 |
| 1996-97 (I) | 17 | 37,600 | 28,200 | 22.3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| (A) | Actual Fees |
| (I) | Indicative Fees for 1996-97 |

Government's justifications for increasing the cost recovery rate, include the need to strike a reasonable balance between the students and the community in sharing the costs of implementing expansion of tertiary education; also cost recovery targets were falling behind current UK and worldwide trends. Comparison is obviously difficult - for example, inflation in Hong Kong is unlikely to drop below 8% in the next few years.

As a principle, Government has stated that the increase in tuition fees will be matched by the increase in funding for the Student Finance Scheme for students in need of financial assistance: 'no qualified student should be denied tertiary education through lack of funds'.

## Financial Assistance

Full-time students who are in financial need may apply for government grants and loans. Grants relate to tuition fees and general course expenses and loans to living expenses. Loans are charged a 2.5% interest per annum and recipients are expected to repay them within a specified period after graduation. In 1993-94, the maximum loan was HK$26,650, and the maximum grant, which varied according to the course of study, ranged from HK$16,380 to HK$25,980.

**University Grants Committee (UGC)**

At the tertiary level, the UGC is responsible for seven institutions and approves student numbers (and funding). For 1994-95, the target number of students (FTE) in sub-degree (mainly higher diploma) programmes and undergraduate degree programmes will be 9,278 (16.6%) and 39,552 (70.9%) respectively. By 1997-98, 'Steady State' is planned to be sub-degree 9,450 (15.1%) and degree 44,446 (71.0%).

**Vocational Training Council (VTC)**

The VTC also provides tertiary education and two new technical colleges enrolled their first students in 1993-94. VTC's initial fee proposal of $10,200 for higher diploma courses was not acceptable to Government, the argument being that there should be a common fee lest a difference in 'value' is perceived. For 1993-94, it was agreed that there should be the same fee of $12,750 for all higher diploma courses, but reduced fees subsequently: 1994-95 - $15,300; 1995-96 - $18,620.

**Costs**

The costs of tertiary education continue to rise and, for the triennium 1995-96 to 1997-98, Government estimates have been approved at $27 billion for the seven UGC institutions.

CityU reached the $1 billion mark for recurrent expenditure in 1993 and the following table for the last three years is indicative of cost trends.

| | **1994** | **1993** | **1992** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Recurrent Expenditure ($m) | 1,247 | 1,014 | 822 |
| Recurrent Cost per FTE ($'000) | | | |
| – CityU | 115 | 109 | 105 |
| – College | 79 | 71 | 55 |
| Numbers of Students | | | |
| – Full-time | 8,720 | 8,092 | 7,376 |
| – Part-time | 5,775 | 5,676 | 5,549 |
| Tuition Fee to Total Income (%) | 14.5 | 11.1 | 10.8 |

For further comparison, the corresponding higher diploma costs/FTE for Hong Kong Polytechnic University are shown in the following table for 1994 (with 1993 for comparison).

| **($'000)** | **Indirect** | **Direct** | **Ind/Dir** | **Total** | **(1993)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PolyU | 54.1 | 62.1 | 87% | 116.2 | (91.2) |
| CityU (COL) | 40.0 | 39.0 | 103% | 79.0 | (71) |

Note: At CityU, indirect costs are derived from the University's total recurrent expenditure less staff costs and on-costs, departmental expenses, teaching equipment and research incurred by academic departments. These are then apportioned to individual departments based on their student load. The expenses for Faculty Laboratory Centre and Faculty/College Office are distributed to the departments within the Faculty/College based on their teaching equipment expenditure and total direct costs respectively.

**Summary for 1994**

- College costs overall are 69% of CityU recurrent costs per FTE;
- College enrolment is 35.2% of CityU's enrolment ;
- HD student tuition fees are 75% of degree student fees.

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